Prehistoric Pottery from UCL Institute of Archaeology Excavations at Downley Park, West Sussex

by
Mike Seager Thomas

A Middle Iron Age settlement assemblage in context

ARTEFACT SERVICES TECHNICAL REPORTS 30 2023

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Technical Reports 30 (ASTR 30)

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Text, photography, graphics and page set by Artefact Services

Cover photograph: Downley Iron Age pot 15

Contents

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by Mike Seager Thomas

The excavated site of Downley[1] is located on a gentle, N–NE-facing slope of a downland spur with views of the main ridge of the South Downs, and, through the Cocking Gap, of the Weald (Roberts, 2018, p. 142). The site comprises a jumble of intercutting pits, postholes and ditches, cut into the chalk and underlying the remains of a Tudor hunting lodge (*ibid*., pp. 145–46), the exploration of which was the intended focus of the excavations. Pottery from these features is attributable to the Bronze Age (**Appx 2**), the Iron Age, the Roman period and the Tudor period (Roberts, 2018, pp. 143–44). A small Saxon group has also been provisionally identified.[2] This report focuses on those sherds attributable to the Iron Age.

The Iron Age assemblage comprises 1130-odd sherds with a total weight of around 10 kilograms (**Appx 1; Figures P1–P12 & F1–F4**). The bulk of it belongs unambiguously to a second, decorated phase of the "saucepan pot continuum", which is usually dated to the Middle Iron Age (*hereafter* MIA) or later MIA. Its attribution here is based primarily on analogy with previously-studied local fabric and typological groups and—in a few non-standard cases—the on-site relationships of the individual pots and sherds. The integrity of context groups within it appear in a number of cases to have been compromised, but the assemblage's size, condition (generally good), composition and overall distribution attest clearly to the presence of a later MIA settlement in the vicinity. Attributing the LIA group, which is tiny (c. 100 sherds) in comparison to the MIA group, is more problematical. It too includes sherds in fabrics and forms with good regional parallels, both "Southern Atrebatic" and "Belgic" / "Aylesford-Swarling", but these are few and in too many cases attribution to the group relies on secondary relationships (most Downley sherds assigned to the LIA group were associated with later pottery), or the absence of analogous fabrics from bigger, closed regional groups of other dates. Whether it is indicative of continuity of settlement activity from the MIA into the LIA cannot be known with certainty, but given the small

1 SU868144

2 Two bags of sherds from the site were labeled Anglo-Saxon (see **Appx 2**). Among these are some shelly wares, which could be Middle Saxon

number of pots represented, this seems unlikely. More likely it derives from disturbed funerary deposits (cf. **Appx 1**), or—perhaps more fancifully—the pots comprising it had been preserved as antiques by the Romano-Britons amongst whose pottery most were found (cf. Lyne, 2009).

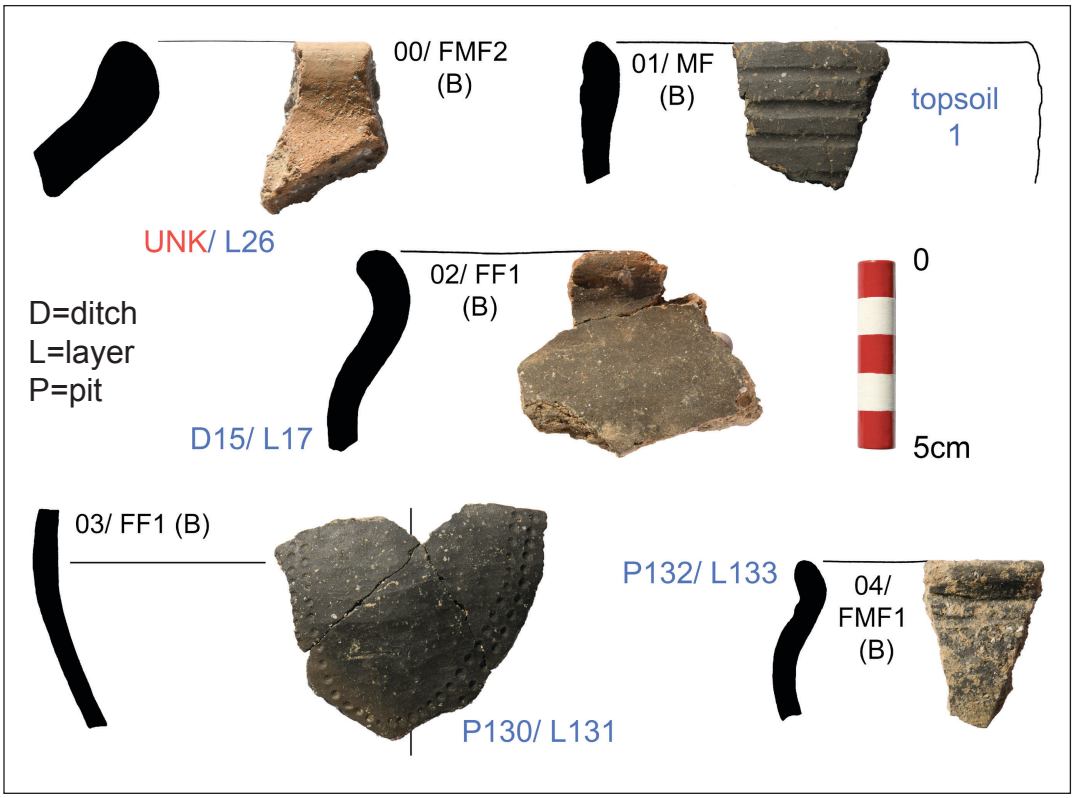


Figure 1

MIA pottery (pots 1–4) and LIA pottery (pot 00) from the site

The importance of the assemblage is two-fold. For prehistoric pottery studies, it broadens the range of pottery types, sizes and fabrics known, or thought to be attributable to the Sussex Iron Age, while its analysis and publication here provides a not to be missed opportunity to illustrate this range in a contemporary way, which is both readily accessible and of practical use to a range of different, interested archaeology stakeholders (specialists, excavators, lay enthusiasts etc.). For the site, it helps us contextualise it chronologically, culturally, regionally, in terms of its material procurement strategies, and functionally. It also provides limited information on its rubbish disposal strategies. (Only an incomplete record of the site's excavation and stratigraphy was available to writer at the time this report was prepared and it was not possible to explore this issue thoroughly).

Site context and its implications for our understanding of the Iron Age pottery assemblage

At first sight the MIA group looks like a good, closed assemblage, and in many ways it probably is. Many context groups comprise MIA pottery

and nothing else (**Appx 2**). Pottery using activity on site prior to the MIA was slight and sherds related to it have not significantly contaminated the later assemblage. Nor was the MIA assemblage obviously mixed with the site's LIA pottery. Also, much of the MIA pottery was recovered from large, drum-shaped pits of a type recurrently, if not exclusively, associated with sites of that period. And yet there are anomalies. Principal amongst these is the presence in what otherwise appear to be closed groups of MIA pottery of small quantities of CBM and Roman pottery, in at least one case from deep within one of the aforementioned drum-shaped pits (pit [460]). Also of note is that that many sherds have been burnt and that most vessels are represented by very few sherds only, including in cases where the feature from which they were recovered was excavated in its entirety.

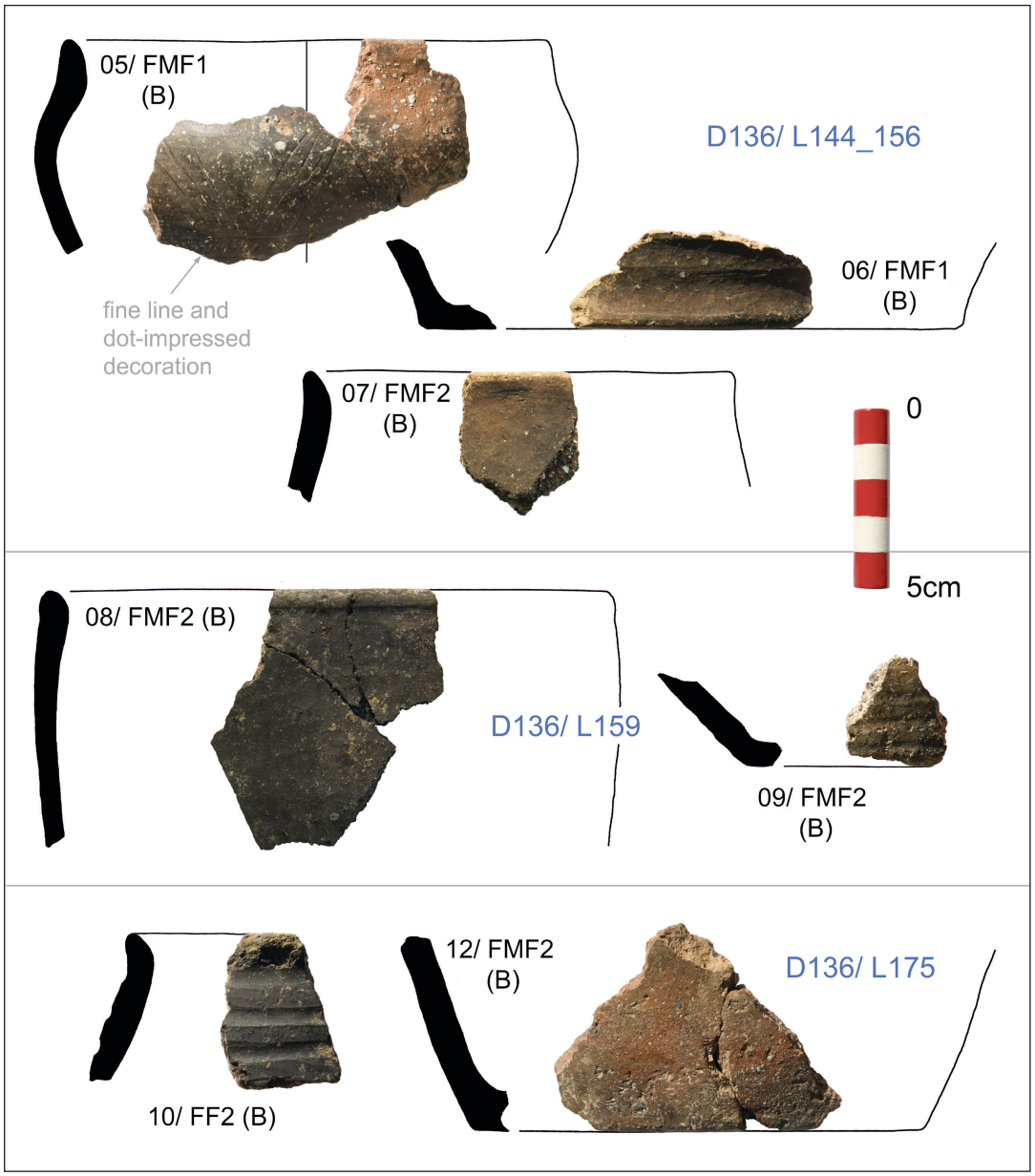


Figure 2

MIA pottery from the site

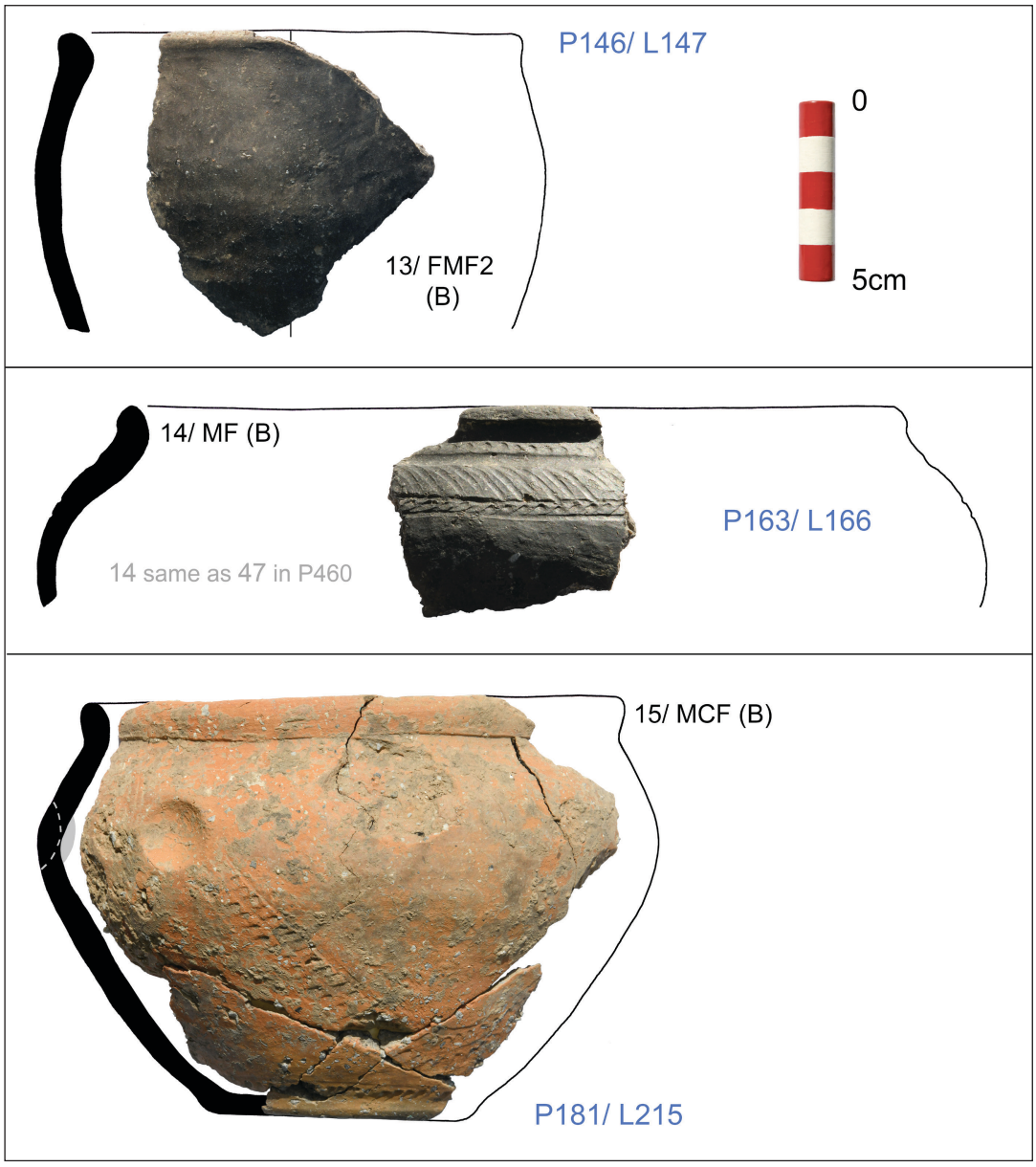


Figure 3

MIA pottery from the site, including a locally rare bi-partite jar (IA pot 15)

Two explanations for these observations come to mind. One is that the features from which these mixed assemblages derive were not backfilled until the Roman period, and then from a source—most likely a midden/rubbish dump—composed of material generated by the site's MIA occupation. Analogous redeposition of Iron Age rubbish was evidenced at Denmead in Hampshire, where an MIA group overlay an LIA one (Seager Thomas, 2005a, pp. 2, 10), possibly Oving, where sherds from the same pots were recovered from different and widely spaced parts of the same features (Hamilton, 1985, p. 226), and at the Surrey hillforts of Hascombe and Holmbury, where totally excavated features yielded assemblages of partial, in some cases burnt pots mixed with a range of other finds types (Seager Thomas, 2010a, p. 22). If this occurred as late the Roman period, we would expect to see evidence

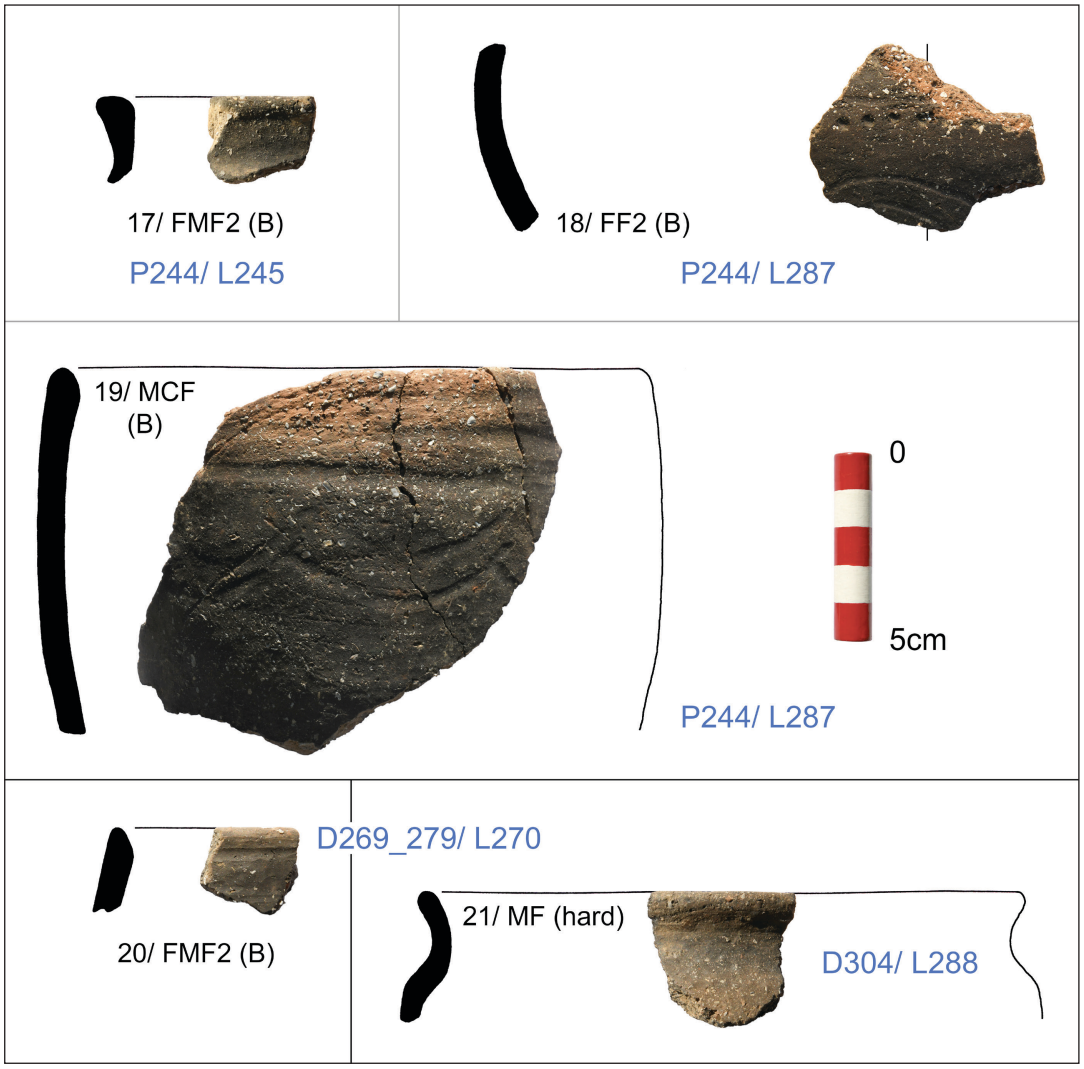


Figure 4

MIA pottery (pots 17–20) and *possible* LIA pottery (pot 21) from the site

of long-term weathering in the features concerned, information that was not available at the time of writing. (Either way, pre-deposition elsewhere is indicated). The other is that assemblages from contexts belonging to different periods were mixed during excavation or subsequent processing. Since the admixed sherds are easily distinguishable from the pottery comprising the MIA group, however, their implications for our understanding of the pottery, as opposed to the site, is minimal. The sherds comprising these contaminated context assemblages cannot be said to be, may not be, of the exactly the same MIA date but they are still MIA. The group therefore continues to be of considerable use interpretatively.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the LIA group. Whereas the MIA group comprises a large single-period group contaminated by a handful of sherds in mostly very different fabrics, the LIA group comprises the opposite. In addition, a number of the sherds assigned to it, most of them on the grounds of what are probably secondary associations and/or an absence

of parallels for them in groups of earlier or later date locally (e.g. IA pots 33 and 55), could in fact be rare, currently unparalleled variants of other date or dates. The group therefore establishes the presence of LIA pottery on site but very little else.

The date of the Iron Age pottery

The Middle Iron Age group

The principal source for the dating of pottery belonging to or associated with the "saucepan pot continuum" is a series of radiocarbon dates from Danebury hillfort in Hampshire, which suggest a lifespan for this of around 300 years. These place "undecorated" saucepan pottery in the fourth century cal BC and the "decorated" floruit of the tradition, to which the Downley MIA group belongs, in the third or even the second century cal BC (Cunliffe and Orton, 1984, fig. 5, no 1). Dates from East Sussex obtained by the present writer confirm this broad chronology for that county (Seager Thomas, 2005b, p. 95). It is unlikely that the tradition impinged much on the following century, at least locally, but the continued use of flint-tempered fabrics and some of the tradition's decorative motifs into the LIA, for example in West Sussex's Westhampnett cremation cemetery (Fitzpatrick, 1997, p. 118, fig. 57), and the co-occurrence of pottery belonging to the continuum with LIA wares or early amphorae on sites such as Tongham in Surrey (Poulton, 2004, fig 4.7b), Hengistbury Head in Hampshire (Cunliffe and Brown, 1987, p. 305), and West Sussex's Torberry hillfort and North Bersted (Cunliffe, 1976, fig. 20; Lyne, 2014, pp. 99–100), suggest that it continued up to it.

The Late Iron Age group

The small Downley LIA group includes both "Southern Atrebatic" and "Belgic" / "Aylesford-Swarling" types. These traditions fill the gap between the "saucepan pot continuum" and the county's first Romano-British pottery. A start date for this gap is suggested by late third / second century cal BC radiocarbon dates on bone from the Westhampnett cemetery (Fitzpatrick, Hamilton and Haselgrove, 2017, pp. 367–72), finer chronological resolution within the period being inferred from associations with brooches (but see *ibid*.) and associations with foreign pottery imports such as Dressel 1(A) amphorae (prior to 50BC) and Gallo-Belgic finewares (post 50BC) (e.g. Fitzpatrick, 1997, p. 203; Gilkes, 1993, p. 7; Hamilton, 1985, p. 225; Lyne, 2014, pp. 100, 114), which collectively suggest that "Southern Atrebatic" pottery might be later than "Belgic" pottery. Whether such dating is as accurate as is supposed and whether or not it matters, is another matter. None of the latter, however, are relevant to Downley, as its LIA group has been detached from any such associations. At best we can suggest that the site's fabric G1 looks a little like Gallo-Belgic *Terra Nigra* and perhaps apes it and that its fabric MQ is similar to fabrics used after the conquest, and that perhaps its pots in these (IA pots 31 and 64) are late.

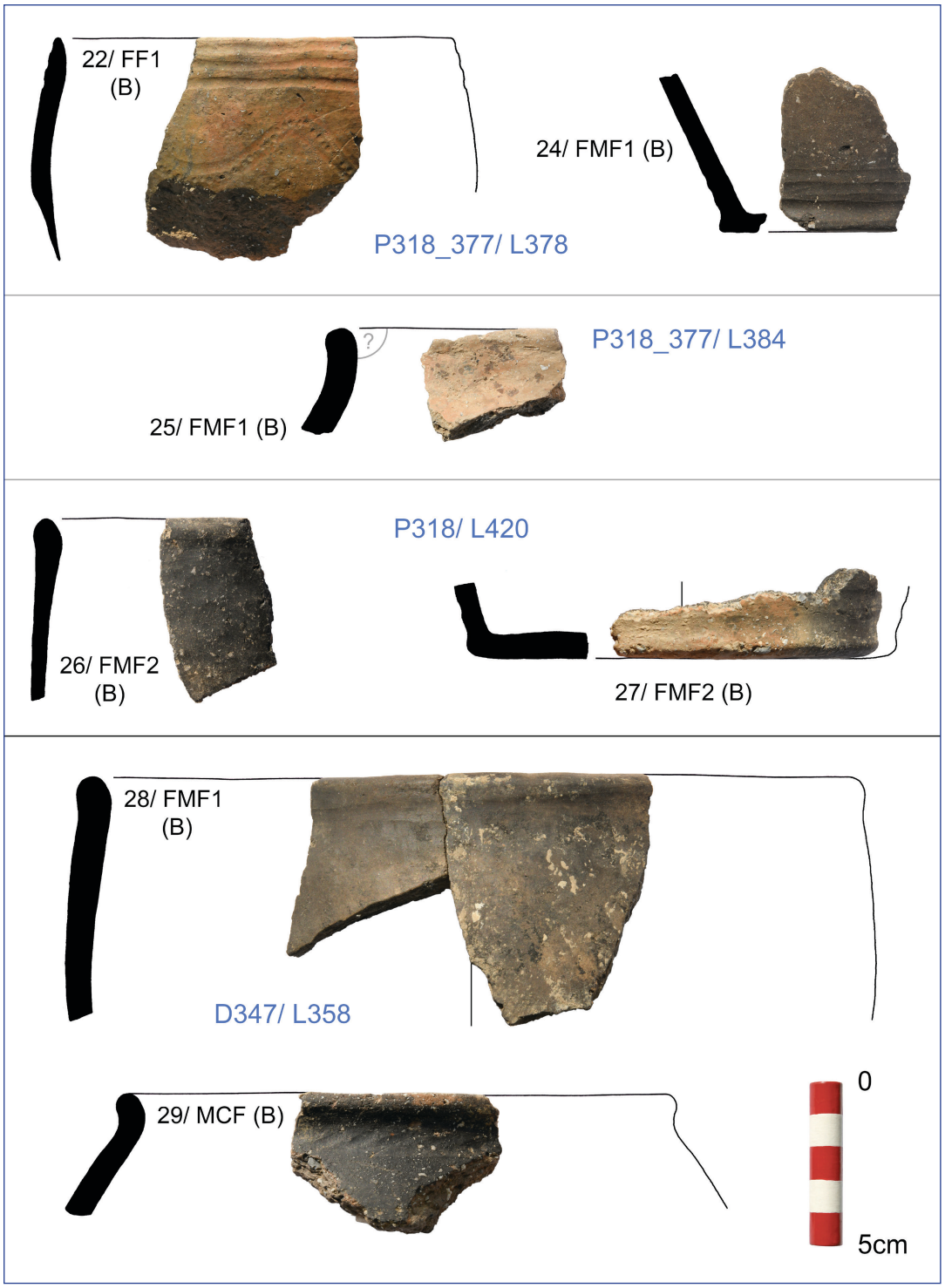


Figure 5

MIA pottery from the site

The Middle Iron Age group

The present group could perhaps be described as a *classic* (western) West Sussex saucepan pot assemblage. For the most part it consists of straight and round-sided saucepan pots, both decorated (IA pots 1, 9–10, 22, 24, 36, 42, 66 and 68) and undecorated (IA pots 8, 26, 28, 35, 40, 50 and 69),

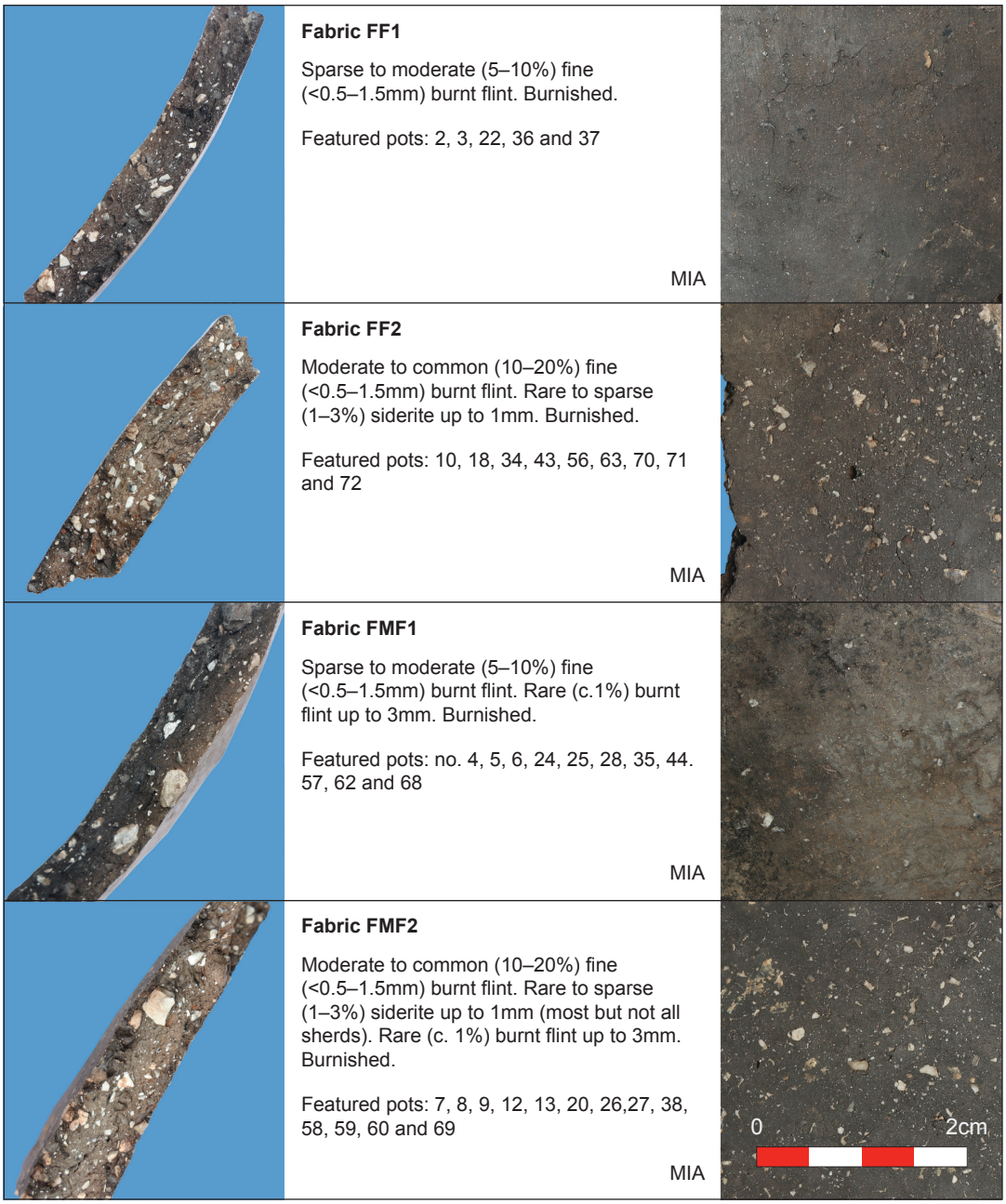


Figure 6

MIA fabrics from the site

some of the latter approaching a globular shape (e.g. IA pots 13 and 31), and round-shouldered / bi-partite pots, all apparently decorated (IA pots 5, 14–15, 39, 57, 62 and 72). The rims of these mostly have a slight out-turn. Bead rims (IA pot 45) of the sort associated with decorated saucepan pots from further east are largely absent. Two sherds only, from different undecorated pots, have short flared necks (IA pots 17 and 49). Pot diameters range from approximately 12cm (decorated saucepans and plainwares) (e.g. IA pots 1, 7, 13 and 41) to approximately 42cm (one of two very large, undecorated saucepans or round shouldered jars) (IA pot 60). The largest decorated vessel, a round shouldered jar, had a diameter of approximately 22cm (IA

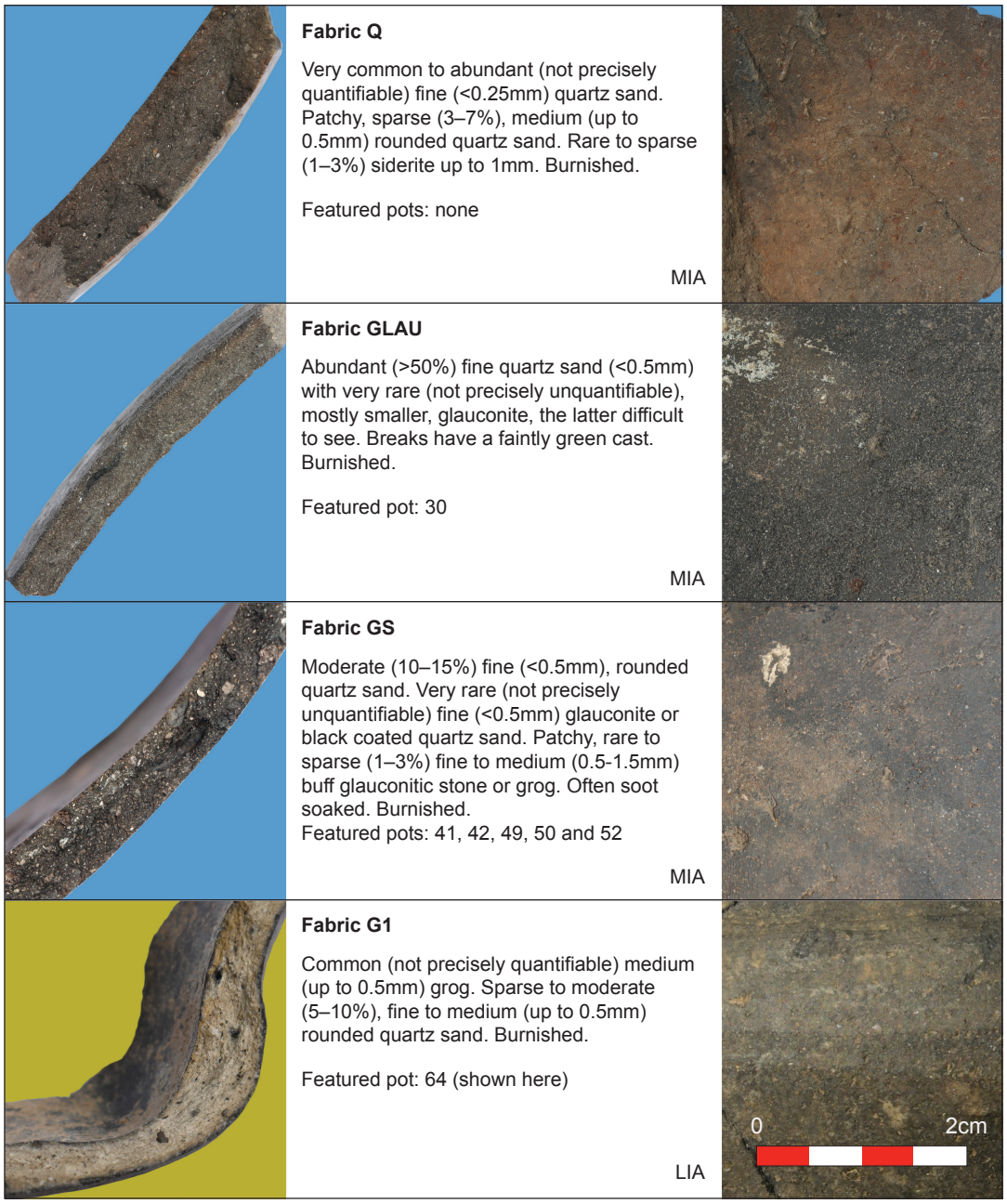


Figure 7

MIA and LIA fabrics from the site

pot 14). Their surfaces are mostly burnished and, except where burnt (e.g. IA pots 15, 19 and 22), reduced (i.e. dark grey). The bulk of the sherds are flint-tempered, their fabrics forming a continuum from sparsely tempered with fine flint (fabric FF1) to densely tempered with medium to coarse flint (fabric MCF), with finer fabrics (FF1–FMF2) dominating and intermediate fabrics (MF), though present, relatively rare. (It is important to emphasise that these fabrics form a continuum, even sometimes across individual pots, and that the fabrics described in **Figures 6** and **8** and named here are generalisations). Also present is a significant minority of sandy sherds (in diagnostic MIA forms) tempered with what appears to be crushed glauconitic rock (fabric GS) (IA

Figure 8

MIA, LIA and probable LIA fabrics from the site

pots 41–42, 49–50 and 52), and a handful of sherds in glauconitic GLAU and grog-tempered G2.

In large part these forms, the decorative motifs applied to them and their fabrics place the Downley MIA group unambiguously within local saucepan pot traditions as well as the wider continuum. Its saucepan forms are widely paralleled, as are aspects of the linear, curvilinear, hatched and dot-impressed decoration applied to these (**Table 1**) (cf. Hamilton, 2002, fig. 5.7). The site's burnished fabrics, most notably its dominant, flint-tempered fabrics, FF1–MCF, have good saucepan pot parallels locally (e.g. in groups from Drayton, Lavant, Littlehampton, Merston, Torberry, The Trundle, Shopwyke

Site	Undecorated	Decorated	Downley parallel(s)			Reference
			Morphology	Decoration	Fabric	
Hampshire						
Charlton		Y	Y	Y	F	Cunliffe, 1996, fig. 35.15
Danbury	Y	Y	Y			Cunliffe,1984, fig.6.63.436
Fareham	Y	Y				Hughes, 1974
Denmead	Y	Y		Y	F	Seager Thomas, 2005a
Grooms Farm, Frithend		Y	Y	Y		Seager Smith, 2012, p. 26, fig. 13
Weston Colley, Winchester	Y		Y			Gibson and Knight, 2007, p. 14, fig. 6
West Sussex						
Tote Copse, Aldingbourne		Y	Y	Y	?GS	Pitts, 1979, p. 259
Roundstone Lane, Angmering		Y	Y	Y	F	Seager Thomas, 2002, fig. 7
Oldlands Farm, Bognor		Y		Y	F	Doherty, 2008, p. 12
Bow Hill Camp	Y	Y			F	Seager Thomas, 2015a, p. 9
Ounces Barn, Boxgrove	Y				F	Bedwin and Place, 1995, fig. 12.2
Chilgrove Roman Villa		Y	Y	Y	F	Cunliffe, 1979, pp. 184–85
Carne's Seat		Y		Y	C, F, ?G2	Hamilton, 1985, p. 43; Seager Thomas, 2010, col. pl. 2
Cissbury hillfort		Y	Y (approx.)		C	Curwen, 1937, pl. XXVII.9
Drayton		Y		Y	F	Seager Thomas, 2010c, p. 2
Findon	Y	Y	Y		F	Fox and Wolseley, 1928, figs 7–8
Ford Aerodrome	Y		Y		F	Lyne, 2004, p.39
Goose Hill Camp	Y		Y		F	Seager Thomas, 2015a, fig. 3
Lavant	Y	Y			F	Kenny, 1993; **Appx 4**
Courtwick Lane, Littlehampton		Y	Y	Y	F	Tabor, 2019, p. 51
Gosden Road, Littlehampton		Y			F	Gilkes, 1993; **Appx 4**
Toddington Lane, Littlehampton					F	Lyne, 2019, appx. 1.3

Table 1

Pottery belonging to the MIA "saucepan pot continuum" from Hampshire (selected sites only) and East and West Sussex showing Downley parallels

Site	Undecorated	Decorated	Downley parallel(s)			Reference
			Morphology	Decoration	Fabric	
Wickbourne, Littlehampton				Y	F	Gilkes, 1993; **Appx 4**
Merston		Y	Y	Y	F	**Appx 3**
North Bersted	Y	Y	Y	Y	F	Morris, 1978b Lyne, 2014, figs. 55–56
Copse Farm, Oving		Y		Y	Y	Hamilton, 1985, p. 222
Dairy Lane, Oving		Y	Y	Y	F	Browse and Kenny, 1991, cover
Park Brow	Y	Y				Wolseley *et al*., 1927, figs 13–14
Rustington		Y	Y	Y	F	Hamilton, 1990, pp. 10–11, fig. 6.2
Selsey		Y				White, 1934
Shopwyke	Y	Y	Y	Y	F	Seager Thomas and Hamilton, 2001b, fig. 2.5 etc.
Slonk Hill	Y	Y	Y		F	Morris, 1978a
Torberry hillfort	Y	Y				Cunliffe, 1976; **Appx 4**
The Trundle hillfort		Y	Y	Y	Y	Curwen, 1929, pl. X; 1931, p. 136. figs 6–7
West Blatch-ington		Y	Y	Y	C	Norris and Burstow, 1950; Seager Thomas, 2005, fig, 4
Westhampnett, area 5					F	Fitzpatrick, 1997, p. 133; Fitzpatrick *et al*., 2008
East Sussex						
Balmer Down etc.	Y	Y	Y	Y	C, F	Seager Thomas, 2008b
Bishopstone	Y	Y				Hamilton, 1977, pp. 89–91, figs
Elm Grove, Brighton		Y				Curwen, 1937, pl. XXVII. 8
Bullock Down	Y					Drewett, 1982, p. 89
The Caburn hillfort	Y	Y	Y		C[3]	Curwen and Curwen, 1927, pls IX, XI–XII; Seager Thomas, 2005, fig. 4; **Appx 4**
Charleston Brow		Y			C	Seager Thomas, 2005, fig. 4

Table 1 cont.

3 At least one surviving feature sherd described as flint-tempered in the published report on the Caburn excavations (Curwen and Curwen, 1927, pl. II.81) is *not* flint-tempered. The inclusions are burnt and small but probably they are another example of the ubiquitous eastern Sussex fabric "C" (see **Appx. 4**).

Site	Undecorated	Decorated	Downley parallel(s)			Reference
			Morphology	Decoration	Fabric	
St Anne's Road, Eastbourne	Y		Y			Barber, 2016, fig. 6.2.15
Eridge Park						Money, 1979, p. 258
Hailsham	Y					Seager Thomas, 2015c, p. 25
Castle Hill, Newhaven		Y	Y	Y	C	Hawkes, 1939, fig. 6.3
Norton	Y	Y	Y	Y	C	Seager Thomas, 2005, pp. 101–108
Patcham Fawcett		Y		Y	C	Seager Thomas, 2005, fig. 4; Appx. 4
Peacehaven	Y		Y			Doherty, 2015, pp. 231–32

Table 1 cont.

etc.) (**Table 1**) and further afield (in groups from Denmead Hampshire, and Hascombe and Runfold / Tongham in Surrey (Seager Thomas, 2005a, pp. 4–7; 2010a, tab. 4),[4] while minority fabric GS is most likely a variant of fabrics "C" and "DC1" noted by the writer in Surrey, East Sussex and in a handful of West Sussex assemblages (Seager Thomas, 2005b, tab. 7; 2010a, pp. 6–8). The only real outliers are the fabrics GLAU, which is considered Kentish and not always MIA (Couldrey, 1984; Lyne, 2019, p. 71), though both the fabric and the principal forms in which it occurs have probable and possible MIA parallels from across the region (e.g. Curwen and Curwen, 1927, pl. 9.59), and G2, fabrics similar to which have been noted in possible MIA groups from East Sussex (Doherty, 2016, p. 177).

As in most saucepan pot groups, however, it also incorporates pots that are not readily paralleled locally (e.g. the bi-partite pots, IA pots 15 and 62, which have a single approximate West Sussex parallel only: Curwen, 1937, pl. XXVII.9). In part this can be attributed to the whim of the potter and the taste of the consumer. There is good evidence for specialisation and trade in pottery and other manufactured goods during the MIA, including in the southeast within and across the area covered by the saucepan pot continuum (Morris and Woodward, 2003; Seager Thomas, 2010a, pp. 21–22). The recurrent use of a limited range of fabrics within the region and the presence of GLAU at Downley are examples. But pottery was still hand-made and hand-decorated and the possibility of individual expression, albeit circumscribed by an established range of useful and acceptable forms and decorative motifs (as in Japanese painting or Georgian architecture), remained. Individual hard to parallel pots in the Downley group, very likely belong to such a category. On the other hand presence or absence may be

4 These named examples are from groups that the writer has handled. Apparently similar fabrics are described from many other West Sussex MIA sites (**Table 1**).

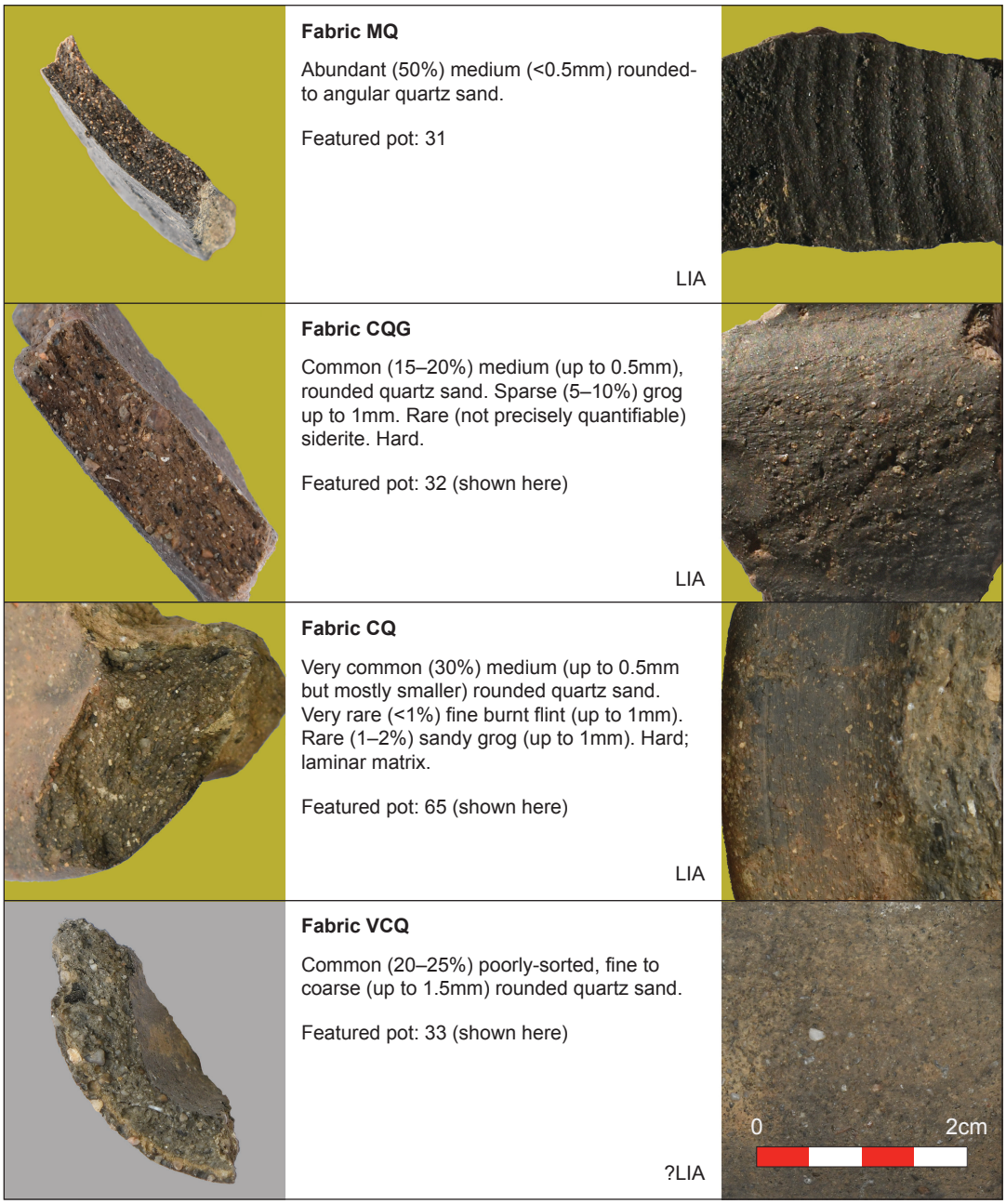


Figure 9

LIA and probable LIA fabrics from the site

attributable to the representativeness or completeness of the group and the role or roles to which pots comprising it were put. The Downley group, with its large range of pot shapes and sizes, was self-evidently put to an equally wide range of different uses, and hence its interpretation here as a settlement, as opposed to—for example—some kind of specialist assemblage.

The Late Iron Age group

The Downley LIA group is distinguishable from the MIA group primarily because of the fabrics comprising it, which are mostly sandier (cf. Tabor,

2019, p. 49), more frequently incorporate significant amounts of grog, and, in a number of cases, are palpably harder.

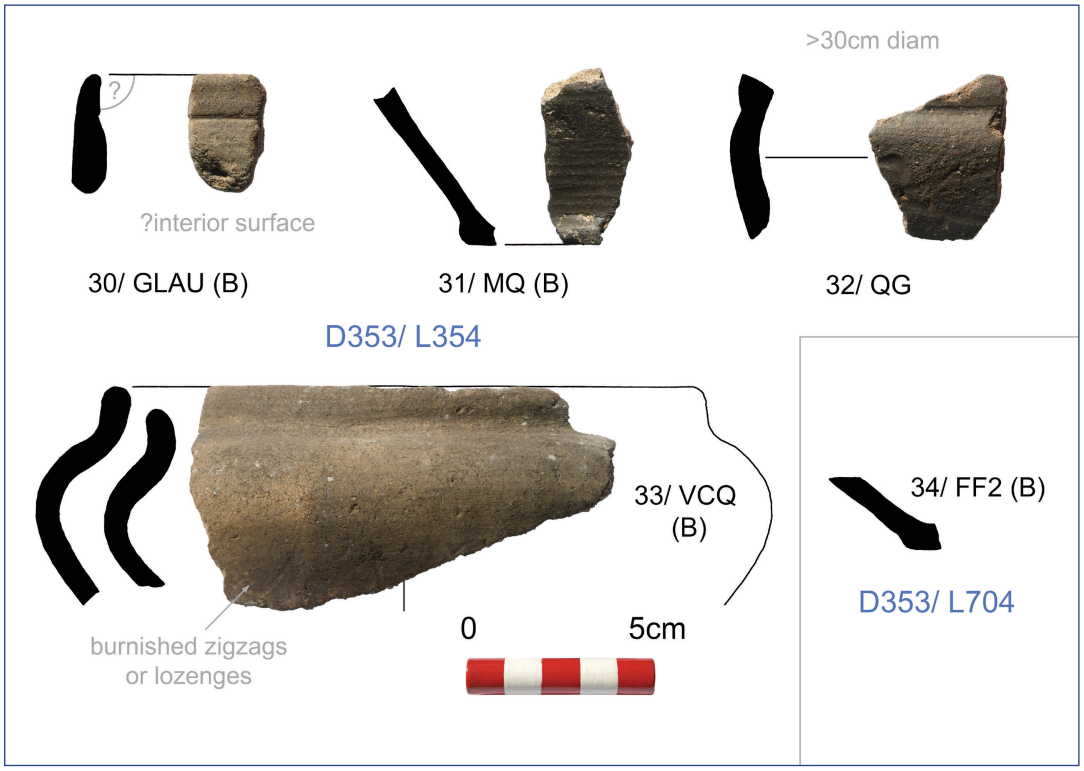


Figure 10

MIA pottery (pot 34) and LIA pottery (pots 31–32) from the site. Pots 30 and 33 lack close parallels but have been provisionally assigned to the later group on the basis of their fabrics and dominant, albeit secondary associations

Where identifiable to pottery tradition, the bulk of it belongs to the "Southern Atrebatic" tradition, distinguishable and diagnostic types within it including large and medium-sized closed-mouthed jars (IA pots 00 and 53), a recurrent form in LIA and LIA/ERB assemblages from West Sussex and beyond (e.g. Norris and Burstow, 1950, pl. 2.10; Seager Thomas and Hamilton, 2001, fig. 1.1), and—notably—several large sherds from a small, round-shouldered necked jar (IA pot 64), which is decorated below the shoulder with scored vertical lines (cf. Lyne, 2014, fig. 59.57), and has horizontal facets around its circumference indicative of finishing on a *slow* wheel. Also, provisionally assigned to the tradition are a closed-mouthed jar of possibly prodigious size (IA pot 55) (**Figure 8**, row 3), and a currently unparalleled pot (IA pot 33), similar in form to an EIA "onion-shaped" pot (e.g. Hodson, 1962), but here—because of its coarse sandy fabric—more likely related to a rare form of high, round-shouldered pot present in MIA–LIA assemblages from North Bersted (Morris, 1978b, fig. 20.146) and Danebury hillfort (Cunliffe, 1984, 6.97.722). Two sherds only are of probable "Belgic" / "Aylesford-Swarling" inspiration: a pedestal base (IA pot 65) of a type usually associated with the "Belgic" cordoned jar (e.g. Fitzpatrick, 1997, figs 62.27002,104.27458 and 105.27351; Thompson, 1979, fig. 1.1) and a sandy, grog-tempered sherd

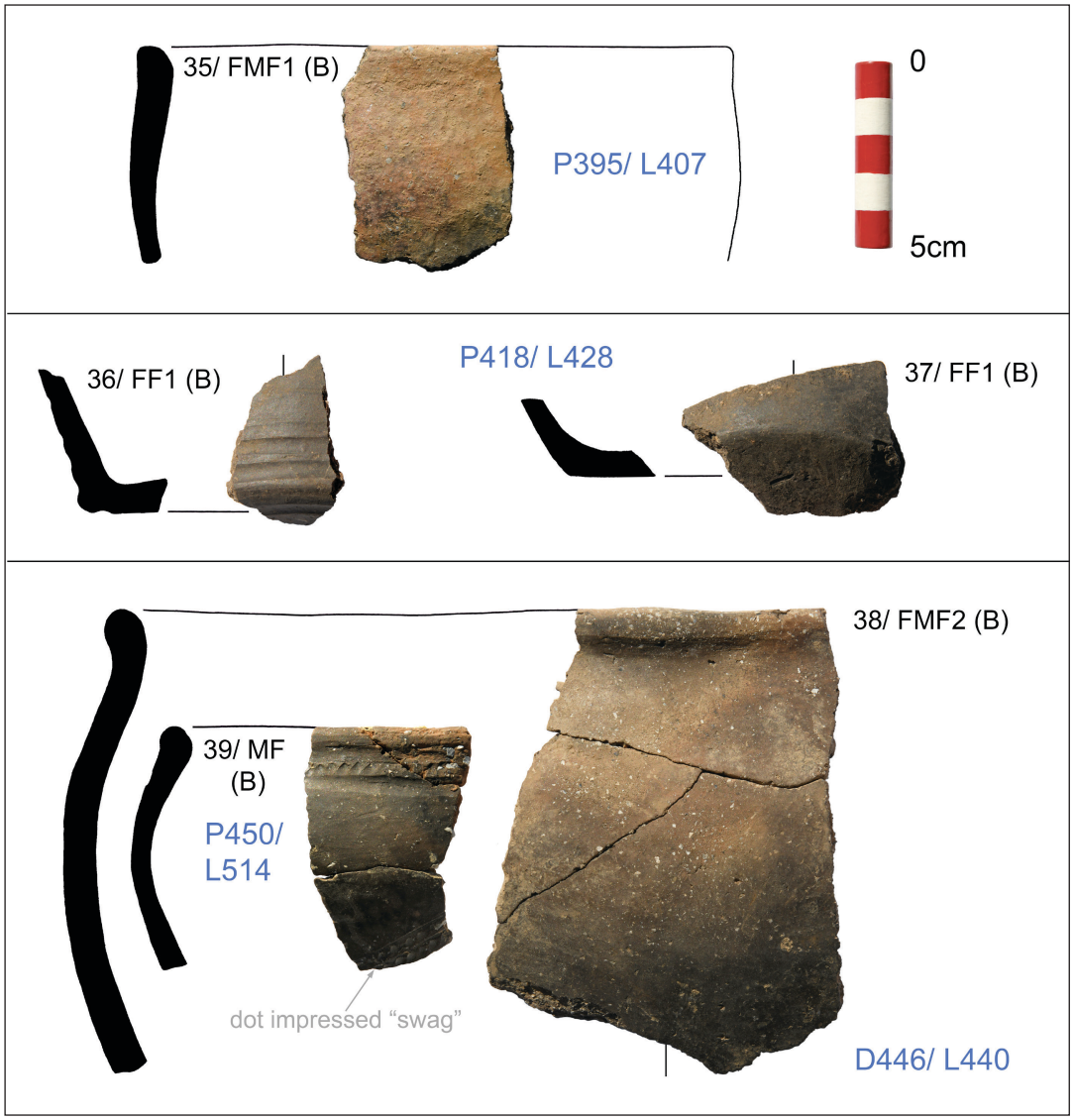


Figure 11

MIA pottery from the site

with a pronounced rounded shoulder / corrugation running into a raised cordon (IA pot 32), which is very likely from the shoulder of a similar jar. No Downley LIA sherds shows evidence, such as horizontal rilling, clearly indicative of the use of the fast wheel (wheel-throwing) in their manufacture.

Owing to its small size and lack of contemporary contextual relationships the LIA group is not particularly useful interpretatively. It is worth noting, however, that it contains fewer "Belgic" than "Southern Atrebatic" forms (cf. North Bersted: Lyne, 2014, p. 115), and that its fabrics, in particular those incorporating flint but also the sandy (e.g. fabrics MQ and CQ), and the sandy grog-tempered fabrics (fabrics G1 and CQG) have analogues in other West Sussex, LIA assemblages (e.g. Seager Thomas and Hamilton, 2001) (**Table 2**). We cannot pin down its wider relationships, we cannot say how it was procured, but it is certainly not necessary to look outside the region for its origins. Just as the MIA group is a Sussex MIA group, the LIA group

Site	Belgic	Morphological parallel	Southern Atrebatic	Morphological parallel	Fabric parallel	Reference
West Sussex						
Tote Copse, Aldingbourne	Y				F	Pitts, 1979, p. 259
Carne's Seat					Q	Hamilton, 1985, p. 43
Ford Aerodrome	Y		Y		F, Q	Lyne, 2004, p.40; **Appx. 4**
Courtwick Lane, Littlehampton			Y		Q	Lyne, 2019, p. 52
Toddington Lane, Littlehampton			Y	Y?	F, Q	Lyne, 2019, fig. 1.28
Wickbourne, Littlehampton	Y		Y			Gilkes, 1993, 5–7
North Bersted	Y	Y	Y	Y	F, Q	Lyne, 2014; Morris, 1978b, fig. 19–22
Copse Farm, Oving	Y	Y	Y	Y	F, Q	Hamilton, 1985, p. 222
Shopwyke	Y	Y	Y	Y	F, Q, QG	Seager Thomas and Hamilton, 2001b, fig. 2.5 etc.
Torberry hillfort			Y	Y	F	Cunliffe, 1976, fig 20
West Blatchington			Y	Y	F[5]	Norris and Burstow, 1950, pl. II.10
Walberton					F, Q	Unpublished
Westhampnett	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Fitzpatrick, 1997

Table 2

Pottery belonging to the "Belgic" / "Aylesford-Swarling" and "Southern Atrebatic" pottery traditions from Sussex showing (approximate) Downley parallels

is a Sussex LIA group. As for the writer's suggested interpretation of it as a funerary assemblage, this is based on the group's small size and the absence from the site of a possible source, cremation deposits being small and easily destroyed. Owing to the absence of the latter, however, it is not possible to prove (cf. **Appx 1**).

Methodological issues

The excavation at Downley, irrespective of its research objectives, was conceived as a training excavation for UCL Institute of Archaeology undergraduate students (Roberts, 2018, pp. 142–42). For the writer and the present analysis, the consequences of this were twofold. Firstly, the

5 Norris and Burstow's pot 10, described as a burnt sandy ware in the published report, is in fact flint-tempered.

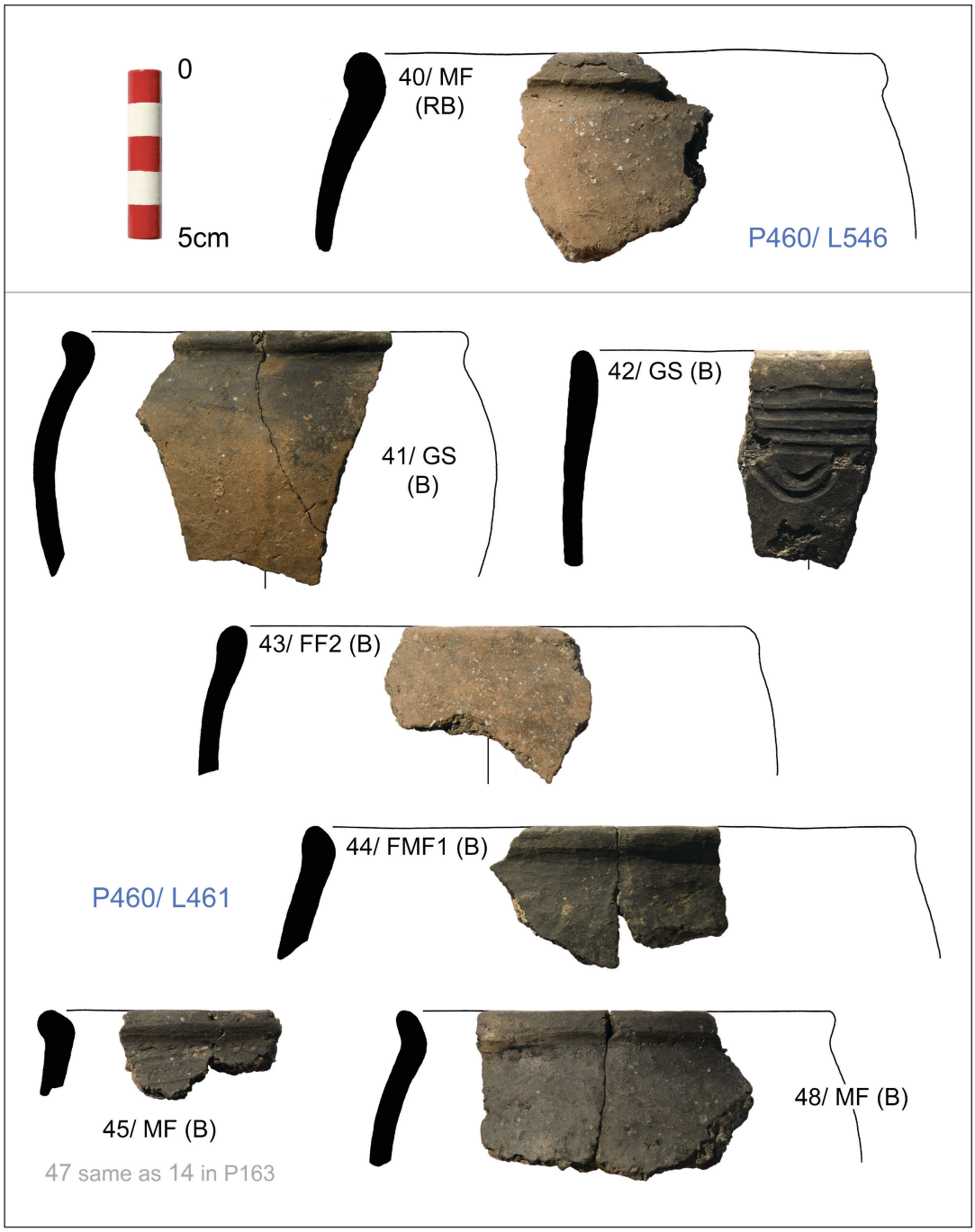


Figure 12

MIA pottery from the site

assemblage was trickled to him, analysed and returned by him over several seasons (2014–22), which meant that he had an extended period to reflect on the assemblage before producing a final report but never saw it as a whole; secondly, no post-excavation assessment for the site was produced, and he depended for contextual information *possibly* relevant to a full understanding and correct interpretation of the assemblage on brief notes and personal communications from the site's director, which, owing the exigencies of the latter's work at the Institute of Archaeology, were not always and never

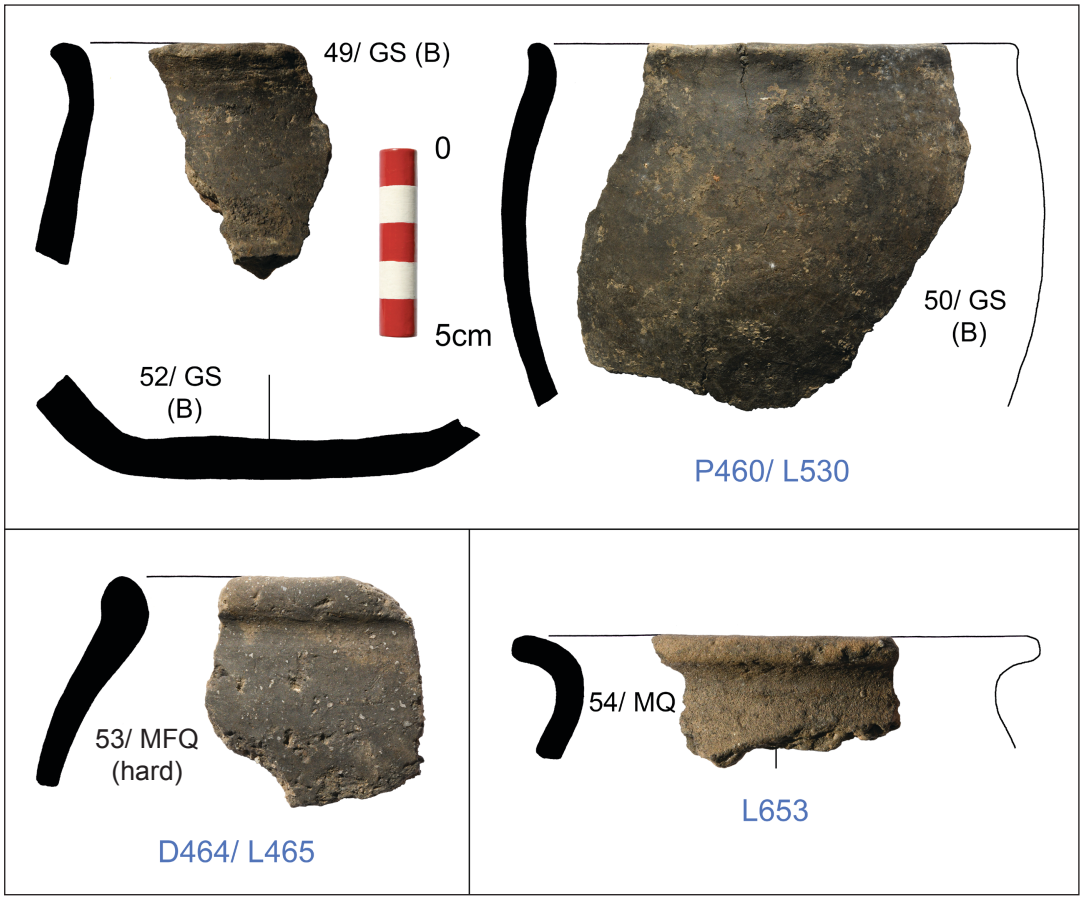


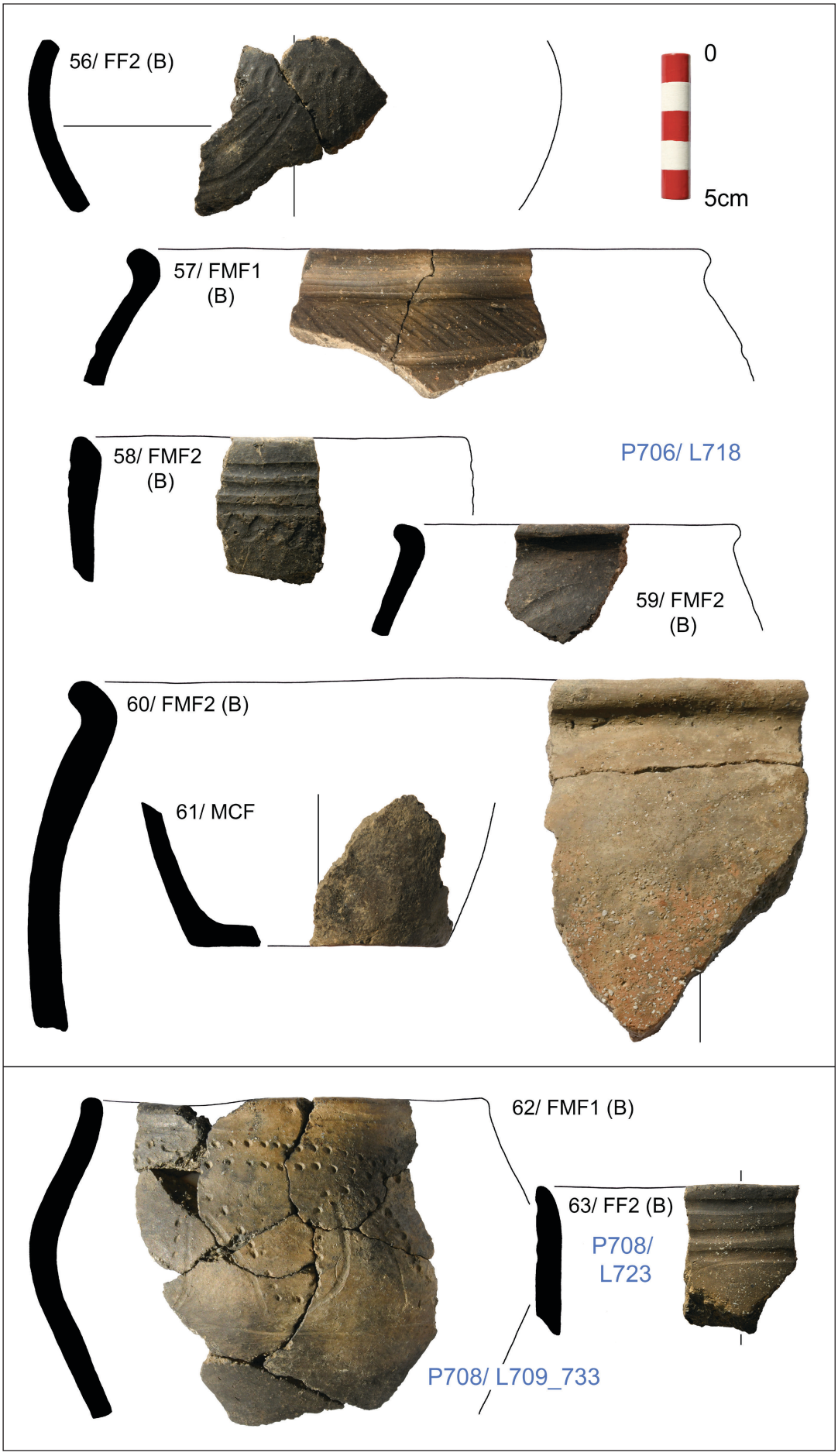
Figure 12

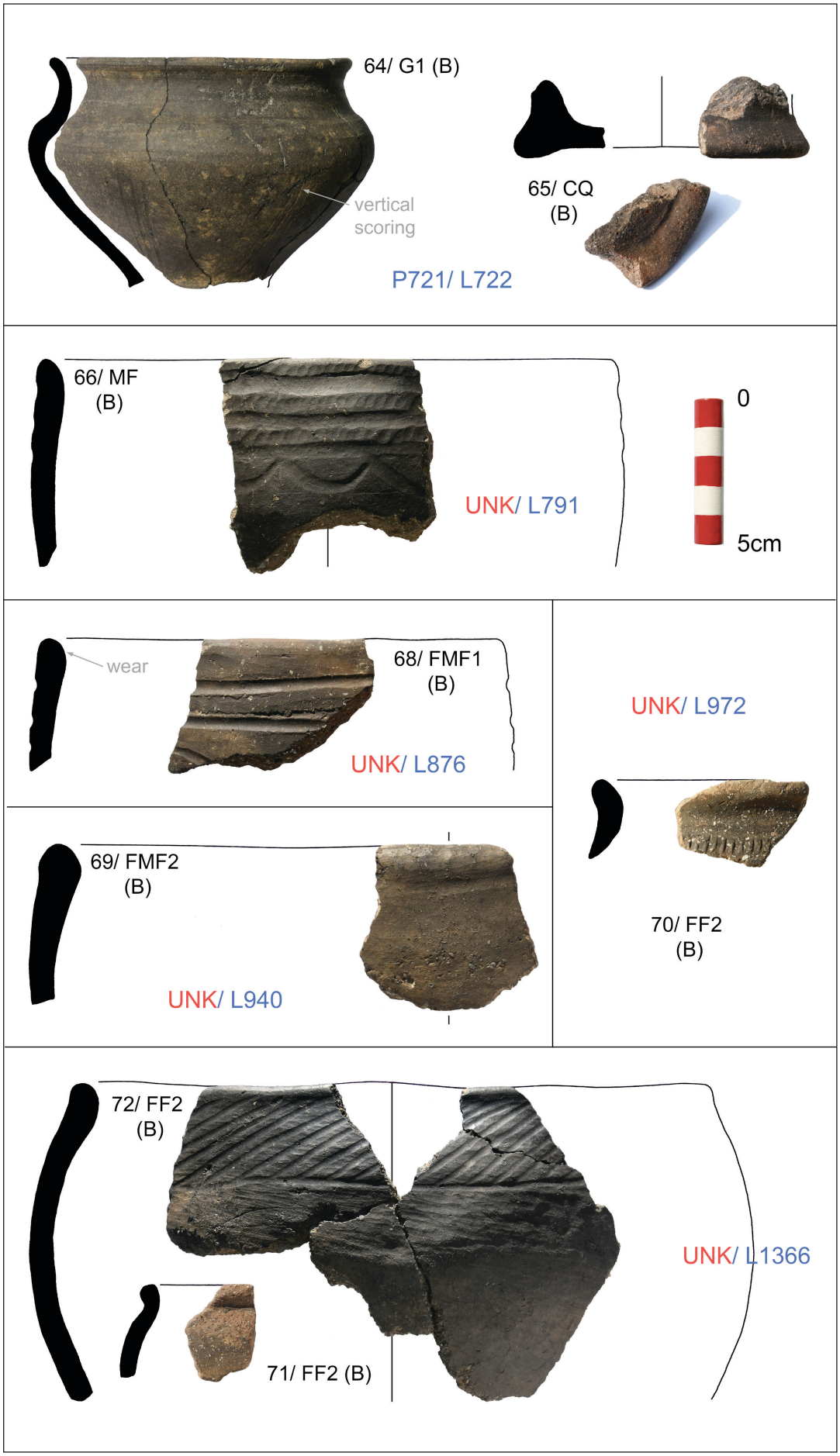
MIA pottery (pots 49–50 and 52), and possible LIA pottery (pots 53–54) from the site. Pot 54 *coul*d be Roman

immediately forthcoming. Despite some small benefits accruing as a result of the extended period available for reflection, the result of this overall is a truncated analysis of the Downley assemblage, the final interpretation of which must now be left to the writer of site report, and a morally and professionally debilitating reduction in status for the present writer from interpretative archaeologist to technician.

Figures 12–13 (overleaf)

MIA pottery (pots 56–63 and 66–72), and LIA pottery (pots 64–65) from the site. Note the very large size of pot 60 and the unusual bi-partite form of pot 62


56/ FF2 (B)
0
5cm
57/ FMF1 (B)
58/ FMF2 (B)
P706/ L718
59/ FMF2 (B)
60/ FMF2 (B)
61/ MCF
62/ FMF1 (B)
63/ FF2 (B)
P708/ L723
P708/ L709_733


64/ G1 (B)
vertical scoring
65/ CQ (B)
P721/ L722
66/ MF (B)
UNK/ L791
0
5cm
wear
68/ FMF1 (B)
UNK/ L876
UNK/ L972
69/ FMF2 (B)
UNK/ L940
70/ FF2 (B)
72/ FF2 (B)
71/ FF2 (B)
UNK/ L1366

Appendix 1: Bronze Age pottery from Downley

The Bronze Age assemblage comprises 30 sherds, one of *probable* Early Bronze Age (EBA) date, 22 of Middle Bronze Age (MBA) date, and seven of Late Bronze Age/Earlier Iron Age (LBA/EIA) date. Two further sherds may be of LBA or MIA date. (The fabrics and burnished finishes of pottery belonging to these periods locally overlap). Except for four of the LBA/EIA sherds, all were associated with later (Bronze Age, Iron Age or Roman) pottery (**Appx 1**).

The probable EBA sherd is in a grog-tempered fabric (fabric GQ), distinguishable from the site and the county's later (MIA and LIA) grog-tempered fabrics by its relative softness. Similar fabrics occur both in Collared and Bi-conical Urn within the county (e.g. Seager Thomas, 2008a, p. 25; 2016, p. 40). Owing to the small size of the sherd, however, and its lack of typologically diagnostic features, it is impossible to place it in either group, or even within the EBA with certainty.

The 22 MBA sherds are in a range of medium to very coarse flint-tempered fabrics attributable individually and as a group to the region's "Deverel-Rimbury" pottery tradition (Seager Thomas, 2008a, pp. 29–37). 14 belong to the base of a small, possibly "bag-shaped" pot (BA pot 1) of a type known from West Sussex "Deverel-Rimbury" groups from Amberley Mount (Ratcliffe-Densham and Ratcliffe-Densham, 1966, pl. 5) and Drayton (Seager Thomas, 2010b, fig. 6.29). Also present is a sherd with a characteristic "Deverel-Rimbury" applied, fingertip-impressed cordon (BA pot 2) (cf. Seager Thomas, 2008a, figs 5–7) (**Figure A1.1**). This small group demonstrates unambiguously the presence of pottery using activity during the MBA on or near the site.

The remaining sherds are typical Sussex "post Deverel-Rimbury" fine to medium flint tempered fabrics. They could belong to the Late Bronze Age or the Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age transition (cf. Seager Thomas, 2008a, p. 41). They are distinguished here from similar MIA fabrics from the site largely on the basis "feel". Exactly what constitutes this in the present assemblage, however, is impossible to quantify and some readers may therefore prefer to consider them undated.

Like the small residual LIA group from the site, these sherds are difficult to interpret. In West Sussex, however, small groups of early sherds amongst later prehistoric assemblages are not rare (Seager Thomas, 2016, 5), and certainly not without meaning.

At the very least they indicate a contemporary pottery using interest in the vicinity—or some proximate location from which they might have derived. At Downley, and during periods such as the MBA and LBA when settlement on dry land appears invariably to be associated with cut features, their sparsity and the lack of cut features probably rules out contemporary settlement activity on site. But they could relate to an activity which involved no, or just a few small, easily destroyed features, and relatively little pottery, such as manuring from a midden (cf. Roberts, 2018, p. 146) or funerary deposition. Or they could derive from a settlement upslope.

For the MBA pottery from Downley, the present writer favours the funerary option as the sherds comprising BA pot 1, which are quite friable, are well-preserved and clearly had not moved far from the pot's original point of deposition. For the site's EBA sherd, it is impossible to say, because the nature of EBA settlement locally remains uncertain. Possibly settlement sites were wholly superficial and pottery associated with them has mostly not survived; possibly they were aceramic. Either way, surviving EBA pottery would be equally sparse. For the LBA or LBA/EIA pottery, the writer is of the view that it derived from a settlement located upslope of the present site.

Figure A1. 1

BA pot 2. *Photo: Mark Roberts*

Appendix 2: quantification and spot-dating of the prehistoric (Early Bronze Age–Late Iron Age) pottery from Downley

Key
Shaded green = pre-MIA; shaded red = post MIA; shaded yellow = post prehistoric associations; shaded salmon pink = key context groups.

Fabric codes: B = burnished; CQ=coarse sandy sandy (contains or is tempered with a significant fraction of coarse quartz sand); F = flint-tempered; FF = fine flint-tempered; FG = flint and grog-tempered; FMF = fine to medium flint-tempered. G = grog-tempered or contains grog; GLAU = includes abundant glauconite-rich sand; GS=?Greensand-tempered; MF = medium flint-tempered; MCF = medium to coarse flint tempered; Q = sandy (contains or is tempered with a significant fraction of fine to medium quartz sand); RB = roughly burnished; U = apparently untempered; VCF = very coarse flint-tempered; VCFQ = very coarse flint-tempered with abundant medium to coarse quartz sand. 1 or 2 after FF or FMF designate sparsely- or densely-tempered fabrics, respectively, but it should be emphasised that these finer flint-tempered fabrics on site form a continuum both in terms of the density and size grading of the flint inclusions, even sometimes across individual sherds.

For more detailed descriptions see the fabric plates (**Figures 6–9**) and the associated text.

Flint-tempered sherds in the assemblage also contain variable densities of fine quartz sand, which, for the most part, have not been distinguished here. “Fragments” here means “small”.

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
linear	008	13	MCF	BA pot #1: base of single small Deverel-Rimbury pot—not illustrated	MBA	Trench 13
		4	FMF1 (B), MF		LBA	
plough soil	001	11	FQ		FMBC	Trenches 14, 15, 16 & 17. Mixed condition; modern context
			FF2 (B), FMF2 (B), MF (B)	rim of decorated saucepan pot; IA pot #1	MIA	
plough soil	061	6	FF (B), FMF (B)	rim of decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Trench 15 Abraded fragments; RB context
	064	4	MCF (B)	decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Trench 15. Fragmented but unabraded; RB context
	083	1	MF (B)	rim of decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Trench 13 RB context
subsoil	650	43	CQ	Very thin, sharply curved shoulder of "onion-shaped" jar (cf. IA pot #33)	LIA	Burnt; all the same pot
D [015]	017	2	FF1 (B) FMF (B)	rim; IA pot #2	MIA	Trench 17 (and hereafter). Rim burnt post breakage
D [036]	095	1	FMF, MF (B)		MIA	Associated with RB
	043	1	GQ		EBA	Collared Urn-like fabric
		2	FG		MBA	Deverel-Rimbury fabric

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
P [130]	131	44	FF1 (B)	IA pot #3	MIA	Fragmented but unabraded
	158	31	FF (B), FMF (B), MF (B)	sherds from 2 probable sauce-pan pots, 1 decorated	MIA	Fragments
P [132]	133	1	FF1 (B)	IA pot #4	MIA	
	169	1	FCF		MIA	Abraded
	177	12	FMF (B)	decorated saucepan pot	MIA	
D [136]	137	11	FMF (B)	decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Fragmented
	144/ 156	3	MF	BA pot #2: Deverel-Rimbury fingertip-impressed cordon—not illustrated	MBA	Fragmented but unabraded; some sherds burnt post breakage
		50	FF, FMF1 (B), FMF2 (B), MF (B)	IA pots #5–7	MIA	
	159	10	FMF2 (B), MF (B)	IA pots #8 and #9	MIA	Mostly abraded fragments, 1 sherd burnt post-breakage
	175	11	FF2 (B), FMF (B), MF (B)	IA pots #10–12. IA pot #11: base of decorated saucepan—not illustrated	MIA	Unabraded; FQ burnt post-breakage; associated with ERB
D [142]	145	1	FMF		MIA	
P [146]	147	5	FMF2 (B)	IA pot #13	MIA	Unabraded
P [163]	165	1	FMF (B)		MIA	
	166	1	MCF (B)	IA pot #14; same as IA pot #44)	MIA	
D [189] & [269]	167	1	FMF		MIA	
D [3]	176	4	GLAU, FF (B)		MIA	Associated with RB

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
P [181]	182	17	FMF (B), MF (B)	base of decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Unabraded; some sherds burnt post-breakage
	215	25	MCF (B)	IA pot #15	MIA	Single vessel; burnt
P [187]	188	2	U, FMF (B)	sherds from two undecorated saucepan pots	MIA	
	213	2	FMF (B)		MIA	Unabraded
P [219]	220	14	FF (B), FMF (B)	out-turned rim of saucepan pot	MIA	Fragments
	283	3	FMF (B)		MIA	Fragments
	290	2	FMF (B)		MIA	Fragments
P [244]	245	16	Q (B), FF1 & 2 (B), FMF	IA pots #16 and #17. IA pot #16: small sherd with dot and line decoration (cf. IA pot #22)—not illustrated	MIA	Mostly unabraded sherds. 2 sherds burnt post-breakage
	287	11	Q (B), FF2 (B), FMF (B), MF	IA pot #18	MIA	
	294	12	F (B), FF (B), FMF (B), MF (B)	decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Fragments
	296	7	MCF (B)	IA pot #19	MIA	Burnt rim-down
P [246]	247	3	F (B)		MIA	Fragments
	279	1	FMF (B)		MIA	
D [269/279]	270	8	Q (B), FMF2 (B)	IA pot #20	MIA	Fragments

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
D [304]	288	3	Q (B), FF (B), FMF (B)	rims of two different saucepan pots; IA pot #21	MIA	
		1	MF (hard)		LIA	Typologically, IA pot #21 could be EIA/MIA, it could be a local—flint-tempered—adaption of an MIA Wealden jar, or it could be LIA. Its hard fabric, MF (hard) is perhaps best placed in the latter period
P [318/377]	378	7	FF1 (B), FMF1 (B)	IA pots #22–24). IA pot #23: burnished line & dot decorated body sherd— not illustrated	MIA	IA pot #22 burnt post-breakage; associated with RB
	384	6	FMF1 (B)	decorated saucepan; IA pot #25	MIA	Rim and sherds from same pot burnt post-breakage
P [318]	420	10	FMF2 (B), MF	IA pots #26 and #27 (possibly the same vessel)	MIA	Small unabraded sherds. 3 sherds burnt, 1 definitely post-breakage
D [323]	323	4	F (B)		MIA	Fragments; associated with undated—but probably late—sandy fabrics
D [326]	327	2	FMF (B), MF (B)		MIA	Associated with RB
P [328]	340	2	FF (B), FMF (B)		MIA	1 sherd burnt
D [347]	348	22	FF2 (B), FMF2 (B), MF		MIA	Associated with RB
	358	66	GLAU, F (B), FF2 (B), FMF1 (B), FMF2, MCF	Body sherds from two or three probable saucepan pots, all decorated, one with burnished lines, one with burnished dot & lines; IA pots #28 and #29	MIA	The GLAU is probably from a MIA Wealden jar; associated with rare RB & MED pottery
D [347/701]	348/702	10	FMF2 (B)	Base of decorated saucepan pot (cf. IA pot #34)		
D [351]	352	2	MF		LBA or MIA	Associated with RB

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
D [353]	353 (354)	2	GLAU, FF (B), FMF (B)	IA pot #30	MIA	Associated with RB
	354	26	FF2 (B), FMF1 (B), FMF2 (B)		MIA	
		2	MQ, QG	IA pots #31 and 32		
		2	VCQ	IA pot #33	LIA	
	704	14	FF2 (B), FMF2	IA pot #34	MIA	
		1	VCQ	furrowed base	LIA	
P [361]	317	1	FMF (B)		MIA	Associated with undated CBM
D [363]	479	3	FMF (B), MF (B)		MIA	Fragments
D [369]	397	8	FMFQ (B)	base of decorated saucepan	MIA	Associated with tiny RB sherd
P [383]	344	3	MF (B)		MIA	
P [395]	400	2	FMF		?MIA	
	407	7	FMF1 (B)	IA pot #35	MIA	Several burnt sherds
	408	2	FMF (B)		LBA/EIA	
		2	FMF, MF		MIA	
P [418]	428	10	FF1 (B), FMF (B)	IA pots #36 and #37	MIA	2–3 MIA vessels including unabraded saucepan pottery
		4	VCF		MBA	Probable Deverel-Rimbury fabric
P [438]	439	1	FMF (B)		MIA	Fragment
D [446]	440	17	FMF2 (B)	IA pot #38	MIA	1 vessel. Large unabraded sherds
	445	7	FF (B), FMF (B)	none	MIA	2–3 vessels; saucepan pots unabraded
P [450]	514	2	MF (B)	IA pot #39	MIA	Burnt

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
P [460]	546	12	FF (B), MF (RB)	IA pot #40	MIA	
	461	58	GS, FF2 (B), FMF1 (B), MF (B), G2	IA pots #41–48. IA pot #46: plain burnished base—not illustrated; IA pot #47: same vessel as IA pot #14—also not illustrated	MIA	Smallish sherds, several burnt post breakage (incl. IA pot #47); associated with single RB sherd and two frags of undated CBM
	515	4	FF (B)		MIA	Unabraded fragments
	521	4	Q, FMF (B)	decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Associated with 7 sherds of undated CBM
	530	14	GS (B), FMF (B)	IA pots #49–52. IA pot #50: body sherds in FMF decorated with fine burnished lines from probable decorated saucepan pot or MIA round-shouldered jar—not illustrated	MIA	Abraded and unabraded sherds
D [464]	465	1	MFQ (hard)	IA pot #53	LIA/ERB	Tudor; Typologically IA pot #53 could be MIA or LIA/ERB but its hard fabric is perhaps best placed in the latter period
D [491]	488	1	FMF (B)		MIA	Fragments; residual in ?RB feature
??	492	1	FMF (B)	base	MIA	Burnt fragment
P [517]	518	1	MF	?decorated saucepan pot	MIA	Associated with RB
P [524]	525	1	MF		FMBC	Associated with post-MED
D [526]	527	5	Q (B), FQ		MIA	Associated with ERB
D [533]	534	2	FF (B)		MIA	Large unabraded sherds; associated with RB
P [542]	543	1	FMF (B)		MIA	Unabraded

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
mixed later layer	653	19	MQ	possible pedestal base; ?IA pot #54	LIA/ERB	Tudor; fabric MQ, which dominates this group, has been identified by another, unidentified commentator as Anglo-Saxon (it is associated in this context with Saxon-looking shelly wares) but in these forms it is plausibly earlier, LIA, LIA/ERB or RB
		3	MF		MIA	
P [673]	674	1	FMF		MIA	Associated with RB
PH [680]	681	1	MF		MIA	Associated with RB
D [682]	683	2	VCFQ	IA pot #55: rounded rim of a very large, thick-bodied (c. 20mm) closed-mouth jar. On the rim's top or inside edge is a pronounced facet	MIA–LIA	Associated with RB
PH [686]	687	1	GLAU		MIA	Tudor
D [701]	702	13	FMF (B)		MIA	Associated with RB
P [706]	707	3	GLAU, FMF		MIA	Associated with RB
	718	20	GLAU, FF2 (B), FMF1 (B), FMF2 (B), MF (B & NB), MCF	IA pots #56–61	MIA	Useful MIA context; the GLAU, which is hardish and thin, probably comes from a MIA Wealden jar
P [708]	709	30	FF1 (B), FF2 (B), FMF2 (B), MCF	IA pot #62	MIA	Associated with RB (according to bag) Sherds from 709 join with sherds from 733
	723/732 732	16	FF2, FMF (B), MF (B), MCF	IA pot #63; sherd from or identical to IA pot #57	MIA	Associated with RB (2 sherds)
	733	12	FMF2 (B)	IA pot #62	MIA	Sherds from 733 join with sherds from 709

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
D [721]	722	10	CQ (RB), G1, CFQ	IA pots #64–66. IA pot #66: base of very large jar in CFQ—not illustrated	LIA	Associated with RB
		3	MF		MIA	
P [730]	731	18	FF2 (B), FMF		MIA	Associated with RB
D [781]	782	1	FMF		MIA	Associated with RB
	001	1	FQ		FMBC	Trench 14.
	002	1	FMF1		LBA	Trench 14. Very weathered
	003	2	FF1, FMF1		MIA	Trench 14. Very weathered
	005	1	MF		FMBC	Trench 14. Too small to date
	009	2	FF2 (B), FMF1	rim of undecorated saucepan pot	MIA	Trench 14.
	025	3	FMF1 (B), FMF1		MIA	Trench 14. Much siderite in fabric
	026	1	FMFG (B)	rim of possible saucepan pot	MIA	Trench 14. Bag says RB context
		2	FMF2 (B)	IA pot #00	LIA	
	789	3	FMF (B), MF (B)		MIA	Trench 17 (and hereafter). Associated with RB (1 sherd)
	791	59	FF2 (B), FMF2 (B)	IA pots #66 and #67. IA pot #B: saucepan pot or round shouldered jar with wide burnished swags—not illustrated	MIA	
	867	30	FMF2 (B)	IA pot #68	MIA	Associated with RB
[871]	872	1	MF		MIA	

Feature	Layer	Sherd nos	Fabric(s) represented	Other diagnostics	Likely sherd date	Notes
	882	2	FMF1 (B), FMF2 (B)		MIA	Associated with RB
	915	1	MF (B)	decorated possible saucepan pot	MIA	
	940	2	FMF1, FMF2	rim of decorated saucepan pot; IA pot #69	MIA	IA pot #69 is unusually large for a saucepan pot
	972	1	FF2	IA pot #70	MIA	
[1035]	1036	1	MFQ (RB)		FMBC	
	1307	1	CQ	rim of possible saucepan pot	MIA	This weathered, rather sandy group of fabrics seems almost to belong to another site
		12	MF, MFQ		MIA–LIA	
	1318	1	FF2 (B)		MIA	
	1339	8	FF2 (B)		MIA	
	1364	1	FF1		MIA	
	1366	23	FF2, FMF2	IA pots #71 and #72	MIA	Mostly from IA pot #72
	1397	>100	MQ		LIA	Very friable; all the same pot

Appendix 3: Middle Iron Age pottery from Chichester Food Park, Merston (GH/18), on the Sussex Coastal Plain

The recent excavations at Chichester Food Park, Merston, yielded 188 prehistoric pottery sherds weighing 1.08 kilograms (**Table A3.1**). The assemblage is highly fragmented with individual sherds showing signs both of surface, and in some cases edge abrasion, and surface weathering. The reddening of the edges of some indicates that these were burned after they were broken.

Sample no	Fabric(s)	Sherd nos	Weight in grams	Diagnostics	Spot date
11	MF	1	7	Decorated ?below rim sherd of saucepan pot (pot 4); fabric; burnished sherd	MIA
12	MF	184	1060	Decorated rims and base of saucepan pots (pots 1–3); fabric(s); uniformly burnished sherds	MIA
15	MF	3	13	fabric; uniformly burnished sherds	?MIA
17	MF	unquantified crumbs		none	ND

Table A3. 1

Quantification of the prehistoric pottery from Chichester Food Park, Merston (GH/18)

Joining sherds from three vessels are distinguishable (Pots 1–3), all belonging to the West Sussex decorated saucepan pot tradition, currently dated with other decorated saucepan pottery to the latter part of the Middle Iron Age (*c*. 200BC) (Cunliffe and Orton, 1984). Diagnostic features of this tradition in the present assemblage include the likely form of the three vessels (upright sided with simple rims), their finish and decoration (uniformly burnished with broad horizontal lines impressed below the rims), and their fabrics (fine to medium flint-tempered and originally unoxidized) (**Table A3.2**), a *set* of characteristics utterly different from those of other prehistoric pottery traditions recorded in the neighbourhood (e.g. Seager Thomas, 2010c; Seager Thomas, 2015b; Seager Thomas & Hamilton, 2001).

Patchy (5–30%) very fine sand to small granules sized (c. 0.125–2mm) white and occasionally grey burnt flint inclusions in a fine (quartz) sandy clay matrix. Note: the fabrics comprising Merston (GH/18) pots 1–4 are subtly different but so are different parts of the sherds comprising these and it is not clear whether the former are in fact different fabrics or, like the latter, different mixes within a single continuum (cf. Downley above).

Table A3. 2

Chichester Food Park, Merston, fabric(s) MF

Pottery belonging to the decorated saucepan pot tradition is not common in Sussex and has not previously been found at Merston but has a widespread,

if thin, distribution across the county, which includes sites at nearby Drayton (Seager Thomas, 2010c), Oving (Browse and Kenny, 1991) and Shopwyke (Seager Thomas and Hamilton, 2001, pots 5, 12 & 40) (for other Sussex and regional sites which have yielded decorated saucepan pottery, see above).

The identification of decorated Saucepan pottery at Merston is of note for three reasons. Firstly, in combination with the Drayton, Oving and Shopwyke assemblages, the Merston assemblage suggests the possibility that sites belonging to the period might have been clustered within, rather than dispersed across the landscape, a view consistent with evidence for other such clusters within the county (e.g. Cissbury, Park Brow and Findon Park); secondly, the uniformity of fabric and form across (and beyond) these clusters is consistent with suggestions of centralised potting and trade in pottery during the period (cf. Morris and Woodward, 2003; Seager Thomas, 2010a, p. 22); and thirdly, the combination of the assemblage's condition and findspot (in a ditch) suggests the disciplined disposal of rubbish on the site from the point of breakage, to a fire site (possibly a midden), or from its point of destruction in a fire, to its final resting place in the ditch (cf. Seager Thomas, 2010a, p. 22). Collectively these suggestions help us to flesh out our understanding of domestic life in Sussex during the later Middle Iron Age.

23th July, 2018

Appendix 4: unpublished images of Sussex Middle and Late Iron Age pottery from the Artefact Services archive

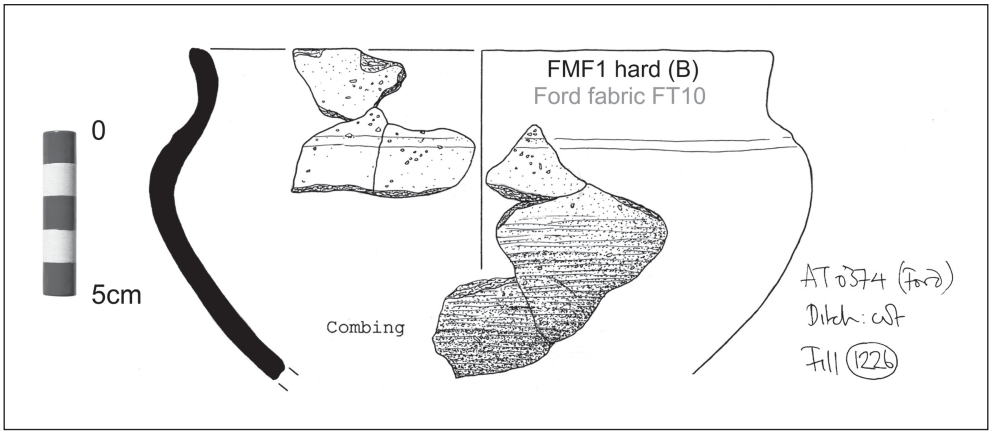


Figure A4. 1

LIA "Southern Atrebatic" pottery from the basal fill of the "Bronze Age" enclosure ditch at the Ford Aerodrome site (cf. Morris, 1978, fig. 19.121)

Figure A4. 2

Decorated MIA sherd from Chalkpit Lane, Lavant

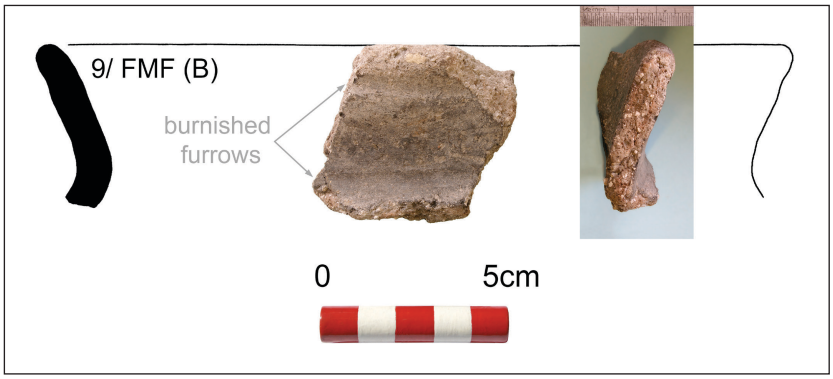


Figure A4. 3

Unusual flared neck belonging to the "saucepan pot continuum" from the Trundle

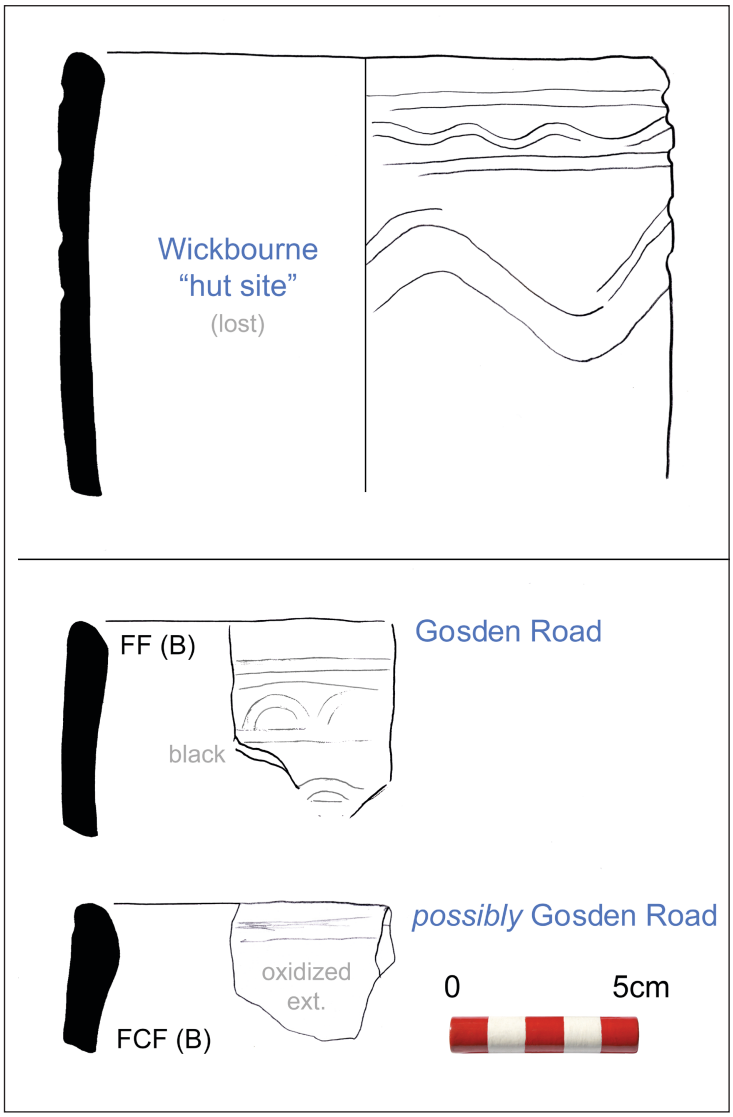


Figure A4. 4

Saucepan pots from Littlehampton

Figure A4. 5

"Southern Atrebatic" pot from Littlehampton (site unknown)

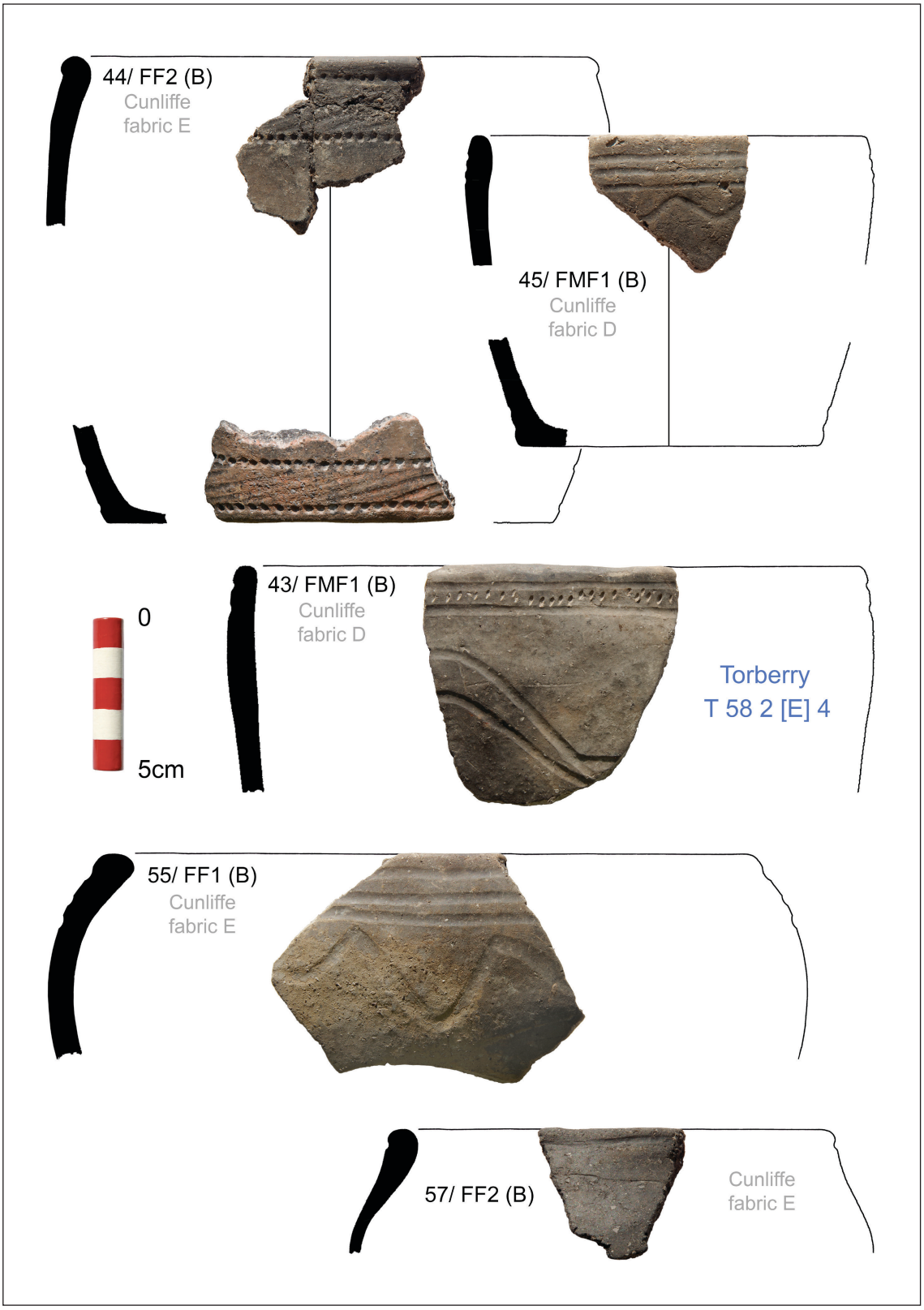


Figure A4. 6

"Saucepan pots" from the "silted up cross-ditch end", Torberry (sections adapted from Cunliffe, 1976, figs 22–23)

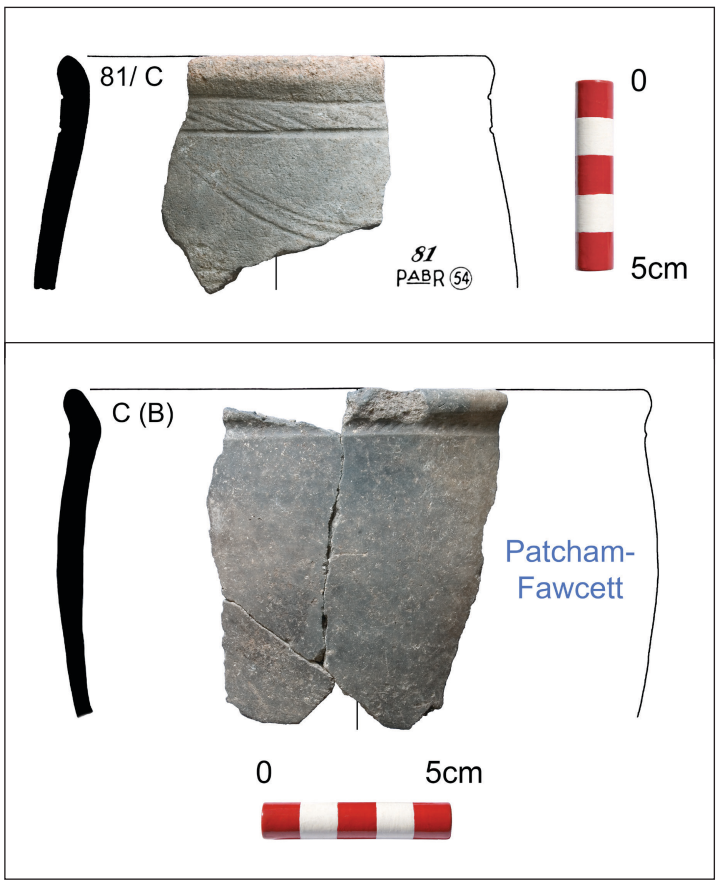


Figure A4. 7

East Susssex “saucepan pots” in fabric C (an analogue for Downley fabric GS). Top: the Caburn, pit 54; bottom: the former Patcham-Fawcett School, Brighton

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